

Frame-up victim Curtis convicted; international defense effort steps up

Political activist faces second trial October 10

BY MARGARET JAYKO

DES MOINES, Iowa, Sept. 14 — More than 70 people gathered at the Mark Curtis Defense Committee office here tonight to protest today's conviction of Curtis on frame-up charges of third-degree sexual abuse and first-degree burglary. Those present vowed to expand the international campaign to get out the truth about this defense effort, led by the Des Moines-based defense committee.

Rally speakers charged that Curtis didn't get a fair trial. He was presumed guilty from the beginning despite the overwhelming evidence of his innocence, he was unable to introduce key evidence that could further discredit the prosecution's case, the judge rejected the jury's request to have trial testimony read to it during its deliberations, and the composition of the jury precluded the possibility that the verdict was decided by a jury of Curtis' peers.

The three-day trial began on September 7 at the Polk County Courthouse in downtown Des Moines. The prosecution's story is that on March 4, 1988, Mark Curtis went to the Des Moines home of Demetria Morris, a Black woman who was 15 years old at the time, and beat and raped her. Police officer Joseph Gonzalez testified that he was dispatched to the Morris house that evening and found Curtis on the enclosed front porch, with his pants down.

Mark Curtis, a union militant and political activist, testified that he was on the porch that night — more than 40 minutes after Demetria Morris claimed she was assaulted — at the request of a different woman who had flagged him down on a street corner. That woman said a man was after her. She asked Curtis to bring her home and wait for her on the porch until she checked the house.

Moments later, the cops came running up on the porch, grabbed Curtis, shoved him into a back bedroom, pulled down his pants, opened his car — which was full of protest literature, and turned him over to two other cops who drove him to the county jail, where they beat him, shattering his cheekbone.

Curtis faces charges of assaulting the cops who beat him. That trial is scheduled for October 10.

The prosecution, through its expert witnesses, actually proved that Curtis could not have been down on the floor of the porch as detailed by Morris. Also laboratory tests on his underwear did not produce one shred of physical evidence that Mark



Des Moines Register

Curtis (far right) addresses supporters in Des Moines courtroom September 14. Moments later he was handcuffed and taken to jail.

Curtis raped Demetria Morris.

Testimony by eyewitnesses proved that Curtis was in Los Compadres, a bar and restaurant, with dozens of coworkers from the Swift meat-packing plant at the time that Morris says she was assaulted.

Prior to the trial, court rulings had prevented the defense from introducing into evidence the beating Curtis received at the hands of two cops or their taunts of him as a "Mexican-lover" and someone who loves "coloreds"; the record of violence and lying under oath of the arresting officer, Joseph Gonzalez; and FBI spy files on Curtis developed as part of the federal government's campaign against the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador.

The 12-person jury began its deliberation
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How you can help

- Mark Curtis faces a second trial on October 10 on charges of assaulting cops who brutally beat him. Send messages to Polk County Attorney James Smith demanding that those charges be dropped and cops who beat Curtis be prosecuted. Address messages to Polk County Attorney James Smith, Room 408 Courthouse, 500 Mulberry St., Des Moines, Iowa 50309.

- To get defense committee materials, including fact sheets, petitions, buttons, and assistance on setting up a Curtis defense committee in your area, contact the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines,

Iowa 50311. Telephone (515) 246-1695.

- Funds are urgently needed to cover legal expenses and to continue the campaign to get out the truth about Curtis' fight for justice. Contributions should be sent to the Des Moines defense committee. Checks for tax deductible contributions may be made out to the Political Rights Defense Fund, Inc.

- Write to Mark Curtis. His address is Mark Curtis, Marion County Jail, Knoxville, Iowa 50138. Copies of the letters, as well as protest messages to Smith, should be sent to the Des Moines defense committee.

Thatcher expels Cuban ambassador

BY BRIAN GROGAN

LONDON — Oscar Fernández Mell, the Cuban ambassador to Britain, and Carlos Medina Pérez, the Cuban embassy's third secretary, were expelled from Britain September 13. The British government acted after a clash between Medina Pérez and of-

ficers from Britain's MI5 intelligence agency working with officers of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

The expulsions were the harshest measures the government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher could take short of severing diplomatic relations.

A statement issued by the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Havana charged that the decision to expel the ambassador, who had nothing whatever to do with the incident, "has only the aim of creating a scandal, as a smokescreen to hide the shameful cooperation of the CIA and British intelligence in this disgraceful episode."

The statement described the course of events:

"At 4:15 p.m. yesterday, September 12, Carlos Medina Pérez, commercial attaché of the Cuban embassy in London, was leaving the building where he lived in that city. He was approached by the deserter and traitor Florentino Azpillaga Lombard, who had abandoned his post at the Cuban embassy in Prague on June 6, 1987, and gone to work for the CIA of the United States government.

"Azpillaga was accompanied by three men and a woman. The traitor, in a threatening way, warned Señor Medina

Pérez to defect. In response, [Medina Pérez] took out the gun he was carrying and fired it, sending the group into flight."

The British government refused to give any details of the incident. Police sources have confirmed, however, that MI5 was involved in the threat to Medina Pérez.

George Foulkes, the opposition Labour Party's Shadow Foreign Minister, condemned the expulsion of the ambassador and accused the Conservative Party government of conducting what he called a

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Daily mass protests in Burma seek gov't ouster

BY FRED FELDMAN

Hundreds of thousands marched in Rangoon, Burma, September 12 to demand that the military-dominated government headed by President Maung Maung step down. Since the September 10 decision by the Congress of the ruling Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP) to hold elections open to other political parties, antigovernment protests have continued on a daily basis.

The demonstrators oppose the holding of elections under the regime's control. They call for replacement of the government by an interim regime to establish democratic rights and organize elections.

Burma is a Southeast Asian country of 39 million people, bordering on China to the north, Bangladesh and India to the west, Laos to the east, and Thailand to the southeast.

The country faces a deepening social crisis, marked by economic breakdowns including soaring prices for rice and other goods and the virtual impossibility of meeting payments on the country's foreign debt of nearly \$4 billion — mainly to bankers in Japan and Germany.

As the populace continued to voice opposition to the regime in the streets, three prominent political figures also rejected the
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Marroquín goes before INS Sept. 20

Mexican-born Socialist Workers Party leader Héctor Marroquín meets with the Immigration and Naturalization Service in Newark September 20 in latest stage of his fight to win permanent U.S. residence. Messages to INS demanding it grant Marroquín a green card are urgently needed.

See page 2.

Marroquín to press for green card Sept. 20

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Members of Congress, activists in the farmers' movement and paperworkers' strike, anti-apartheid fighters, and human rights representatives are urging the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to grant Héctor Marroquín permanent residency in the United States.

Marroquín meets with the INS on obtaining his "green card" September 20 at Newark International Airport in New Jersey. A delegation of prominent individuals will accompany him to the INS offices. All those wishing to participate should meet at 8:30 a.m. in the International Waiting Room, Door 5, Terminal C, at Newark airport.

There will be an open house for Marroquín's supporters the same day at the Pathfinder Bookstore in Newark, 141 Halsey St., from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. A recep-

son have been pouring in ever since. "There is no justification for this further delay," wrote California Rep. Mervyn Dymally, chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus. "It amounts to nothing more than harassment. I urge that you cease any further delay and grant Mr. Marroquín his green card."

Rep. Esteban Torres (D-Calif.) also sent a protest letter to Nelson, saying he was "dismayed to learn that when Mr. Marroquín presented his Immigrant Visa to the INS officials at Toronto International Airport, they began interrogating him about his political views and deferred a ruling on his permanent residence."

Protests have also been sent to Nelson from Carroll Narmyer, Iowa state president of the American Agriculture Movement, Inc.; Ed Long, Jr., a striking paperworker and member of United Paperworkers International Union Local 1787 in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania; and Susan Mnumzana, secretary for women's affairs of the African National Congress mission to the United Nations.

Also protesting the INS stalling are Marta Alicia Rivera, a teacher from El Salvador who was tortured by the regime there; Julie Mungai, Committee to Stop

McCarran-Walter Act Deportations; and poet and author Piri Thomas.

Alfredo Alvarez, head of the Human Rights Commission in Des Moines, Iowa, sent a letter to Nelson September 6. "I wish to express my deep appreciation for granting Héctor Marroquín an Immigrant Visa from the U.S. Consul General in Toronto, Canada," he wrote. "However, I do note that Héctor has had a long 11-year struggle to gain legal status in the United States. His struggle has continued despite the United States government's efforts to deny him legal status based on his political views and membership in the Socialist Workers Party."

"I do not believe in excluding anyone because their views are inconsistent with mainstream political thinking of a country," Alvarez said. "This type of blatant discrimination goes entirely against the principles and ideals this nation purports to be based on: freedom of expression and basic civil liberties."

Protest telegrams to the INS should be sent to: Alan Nelson, INS Commissioner, 425 Eye St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20536. Send copies to the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee, Box 761 Church Street Station, New York, N.Y. 10007. Telephone (212) 219-3679.



Congressional Black Caucus head Mervyn Dymally wrote that immigration agents' treatment of Marroquín was "harassment."



Militant/Nelson Blackstock Julie Mungai of Committee Against McCarran-Walter Act Deportations is backing Marroquín's fight.

tion will take place at the Pathfinder Bookstore in New York City, at 79 Leonard St., that evening at 7:00 p.m.

Marroquín is a Mexican-born leader of the Socialist Workers Party. After he fought for more than a decade for his right to permanent residence in the United States, the U.S. consulate in Toronto, Canada, finally granted him an immigrant visa on August 31.

But when Marroquín then presented the visa to INS officials at the Toronto airport, they refused to stamp his Mexican passport signifying he is a permanent resident. Instead, they demanded he answer questions about his political views and affiliations and then told him he had to go to the INS offices at the Newark airport September 20.

Protests to INS Commissioner Alan Nel-

250 at Zimbabwe book launching for 'Che Guevara and Cuban Revolution'

BY ALAN HARRIS

HARARE, Zimbabwe — "I believe there could be no better time for this book launch. We must feel proud that Che Guevara's message, given more than 20 years ago, has not remained unheard by millions of people, particularly in this region, where the Angolan-Namibian freedom fighters and Cuban combatants, together on the front line of the battle against the racist South African army, stood up to defend, with blood and fire, the sovereignty and independence of the brotherly people of Angola."

These remarks by Alfonso Fraga, Cuban ambassador to Zimbabwe, were made at the September 9 meeting to promote *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution* here. Some 250 people packed the Ambassador Hotel in downtown Harare for the book launching. *Che Guevara*, a collection of speeches and writings by one of the central leaders of the Cuban revolution, was published by Pathfinder/Pacific and Asia in October 1987 on the 20th anniversary of Guevara's death.

The meeting here was initiated by Grassroots Books, a major publisher in Zimbabwe that operates two bookstores here. Paul Brickhill, Grassroots' director, chaired the program.

José Antonio Fernández, of the José Martí Publishing House in Havana, told

the meeting about the collaboration between the Cuban publishing house and Pathfinder/Pacific and Asia in preparing *Che Guevara*.

"We can't launch a book on Che Guevara," said David Deutschmann, editor of the Guevara book, "especially here at its first African presentation, without paying tribute to the recent military victory against the racist South African regime at the battle of Cuito Cuanavale in southern Angola. This military victory is based on the 13-year commitment of revolutionary Cuba to help defend Angola's sovereignty and independence."

He described the role played by Guevara in helping to forge Cuba's links with liberation movements throughout Africa. Guevara frequently visited Africa as a representative of the Cuban government. In 1965 he came with a group of Cuban internationalist volunteers to fight alongside the forces in the Congo who were fighting the imposition of a neocolonial regime by U.S. and Belgium imperialists.

Titus Motsoabe, one of Zimbabwe's leading poets, read a poem dedicated to Guevara that he had written for the book launching.

Arthur Mutambara, general secretary of the Students Representative Council at the University of Zimbabwe, explained that Guevara's understanding of the role of vol-

untary work was "an example to us all."

Senator J. Culverwell, a minister of state and representative of the Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front), said, "It is not enough to simply limit our knowledge of Che Guevara to hazy, romantic notions. . . . I commend this book to the Zimbabwean public. Study and learn from it."

Many other groups and individuals helped build the meeting, and participated in it. They included Albert Muzarurwa and Remus Makuwaza, leaders of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions; Chenjerai Hove, chairman, Zimbabwe Writers Union; Edgar Mbembwe, president, National Students Union; Charles Chikerema, president, Zimbabwe Union of Journalists; and Shadrack Gutto, from the Zimbabwe Association of Democratic Jurists.

The following day a seminar on Che Guevara attended by 110 people — including 50 high school students — was held at the University of Zimbabwe. Cain Mathema, a prominent playwright and author of the recently published pamphlet *Let Us Fight Neocolonialism*; Gutto; Deutschmann; and Fernández addressed the seminar.

Participants in the book meeting and the seminar bought \$900 of Pathfinder and José Martí Publishing House titles. This included more than 40 copies of *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution*.

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SPECIAL OFFER



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Factory conflicts in Nicaragua spark debate on union democracy

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — In a hotly contested election September 7, supporters of the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST) regained leadership offices in the local union at the Sacos MACEN factory near Managua. However, the tactics used by the CST leaders provoked some sharp public criticism here.

Sacos MACEN is a state-owned company that produces sacks used for rice, coffee, sugar, and other agricultural products. The 540 employees are organized in a union that has long been affiliated to the CST, which is led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).

In August 1987, however, the MACEN workers elected supporters of the Workers Front (FO) to head their local union. The FO is a small union federation led by the Marxist-Leninist Party, an ultraleft group opposed to the FSLN.

In August of this year, FSLN activists in the plant, backed by CST regional and national staff members, began a campaign to take back the leadership of the MACEN local.

On August 22 a group of CST members got into a heated argument with Armando Quezada, president of the local. In the course of the dispute the CSTers physically chased Quezada and four other union officers from the plant. They also ejected 11 other workers who they said supported the FO.

The next day, FSLN leaders in the plant organized a workers' assembly where they demanded that the factory director fire the union officials who had been driven from the plant. The assembly called for allowing the return of the 11 other workers, however. Following the assembly, the director fired the five union officers.

Many workers in the plant disagreed with the expulsions. Manuel, a carpenter with five years at MACEN, told the *Militant* he thought the old union officers "had committed irregularities" and he didn't support them. However, he said, "We workers asked the CST and the FSLN to let them all back so we could have free and clean union elections."

The Ministry of Labor later ruled that the five unionists should be allowed back on the job since the company had not followed procedures specified by Nicaraguan labor laws in the firings.

FSLN leaders criticize CST actions

On August 27 three members of the FSLN National Directorate, Bayardo Arce, Luis Carrión, and Víctor Tirado, held a meeting with 300 FSLN members from different factories. According to an account of the meeting in the Sandinista daily *Barricada*, the FSLN leaders expressed criticisms of the CST actions at the MACEN plant, and in a similar incident where CST members drove elected union officers out of the privately owned Toña brewery.

One of the FSLN members at the assembly urged the use of "political discussion and not jailers' methods" against the workers, *Barricada* wrote. Others reportedly disagreed, however, defending the actions taken at the MACEN plant and asserting they would "use all methods necessary" in the future.

"This attitude was rejected by the members of the National Directorate at the end of the meeting," *Barricada* reported.

The Sandinista daily, which had initially given favorable coverage to the ousting of the MACEN and Toña union officers, also criticized the actions of the CST leaders in an August 30 editorial.

The "principal challenge" faced by the FSLN and the CST in the labor movement is to "change the methods and styles of work," to use "political-ideological debate" instead of "administrative measures and coercive actions," and to "deepen the

practice of internal democracy," *Barricada* said.

Election at MACEN factory

On September 7 some 350 workers attended a general assembly at the MACEN plant to elect new union officers. The assembly was chaired by an official of the Ministry of Labor. Regional and national CST leaders and a delegation of deputies from Nicaragua's National Assembly were also present.

The cafeteria where the meeting was held was decorated with placards attacking the outgoing officers. Slogans included: "We'll continue our offensive against the workers' enemies"; "The FO and the contras are the same thing"; and "FO out of MACEN."

Before and during the meeting FSLN activists led their supporters in boisterous chants: "We will crush the FO and its independent union"; "For workers' unity: FO out of MACEN"; and "Get out! Get out! Get out!" About one-quarter of the workers present participated in the chanting.

Denis Parrales, FSLN-backed candidate for local union president, spoke first. He accused the FO-supported union officers of dividing the workers against the administration and opposing volunteer overtime to raise production. He also charged that they had urged workers to sabotage production by breaking machines and slashing rolls of cloth.

In addition, Parrales said, the officers had demanded a 500 percent wage increase at a time when the factory was only working at part of its capacity. "We all know that we have needs here," Parrales said, "but this was a counterrevolutionary action that put them close to Yankee imperialism."

Furthermore, he said, after a clash between the Sandinista Police and antigov-

Changes in Managua Bureau

The Managua Bureau of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* has a new staff member, Seth Galinsky. Harvey McArthur, who has worked on the bureau staff since January 1986, will be returning to the United States shortly.

In the two and a half years since he joined the bureau, McArthur has written extensively on peasant struggles in Nicaragua and on issues in the labor movement. He has filed numerous stories from the country's war zones, rural areas, and Atlantic Coast.

Galinsky worked as a cutter and sewing machine operator at Manny's, a garment shop in Los Angeles, before moving to Managua. He was a member of Local 482 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and also active in the



Seth Galinsky

Militant/Robert Kopec



Militant/Harvey McArthur

Nicaraguan trade union assembly in 1987. How to deal with political differences inside workers' movement is topic of heated debate today.

ernment demonstrators in the town of Nandaime last July, union president Quezada had criticized the police instead of the demonstrators.

All this showed that Quezada had been carrying out a plan of destabilization organized by the U.S. embassy, Parrales said. He also accused Quezada of carrying a concealed knife during an argument with CST activists in the factory.

"False workers have no place here," Parrales declared. "Either they improve their stance or we will defeat them politically, or we will get them out of here by any means necessary."

Parrales then presented his "Plan of Struggle" to the workers. It consisted of demands for a 140 percent wage increase, a free allotment of food to each worker each month, and company-supplied work clothes and shoes for production workers.

Secret ballot rejected

When Quezada took the floor, he said he did not intend to answer the charges raised by the Sandinistas, but wanted to read a report summing up his leadership of the union. The chair ruled this out of order. Quezada then asked the assembly if they wanted to hear his report, but when dozens of workers shouted "No!" he sat down.

When it came time to vote, an FO supporter proposed there be a secret ballot. The CSTers insisted on a hand vote, how-

ever, and the worker was shouted down.

When the balloting began, those who raised their hands for Parrales were greeted with loud cheers from his supporters, while the first few who voted for Quezada were soundly booed. Quezada and 40 other workers then walked out of the meeting, saying they were being pressured and threatened. Over the next few minutes another 50 workers also drifted away from the meeting. The remaining 250 proceeded to elect the new union officers, with the Sandinista candidates running unopposed. Parrales was elected president with 181 votes.

At the end of the voting, Ministry of Labor officials certified the election and swore in the new union officials.

Dámaso Vargas, CST general secretary for the Managua region, then addressed the assembly. He praised the workers there "for the great job you have carried out." The CST, he said, had won a victory "in the battle against imperialism and the reactionary Nicaraguan bourgeoisie, who are joined by the tiny [opposition] union groups. We will crush them whenever they act to boycott production, to boycott the defense of the revolution, and try to divide the workers. And we will crush them whenever they discuss such actions."

Vargas pointed out that there were still many workers at the MACEN plant who had not been won to support the CST's perspectives. "With their attitude of not participating in campaigns of production and defense, they take the side of the counter-revolution," he said. Sandinista supporters "must direct our message to these workers" in a "battle to change their consciousness."

The final point at the assembly concerned the news coverage of the CST union election campaign. The government-owned radio station La Primerísima had broadcast news reports critical of the CST leaders' tactics, and reported that many workers at the plant wanted a union independent of both the CST and the FO.

Parrales took the floor to denounce "distorted coverage" by the radio station.

On September 10 *Barricada* ran an editorial critical of the conduct of the MACEN elections. "The CST's victory occurred in an atmosphere that was more of a confrontation than healthy debate, of pressure more than persuasion," the editorial said.

The FSLN and CST had not done consistent political work in the plant for years, and therefore had limited influence, *Barricada* wrote. It quoted favorably one worker who said, "You can't achieve in a few weeks what you haven't done for years."

The workers had "great political maturity" that led them to criticize the FO's methods, *Barricada* said, "but this also led them to question the CST's top-down style of imposing themselves."

After the elections, many MACEN workers demanded the right to think and make decisions freely, *Barricada* continued. "Revolutionary ideas cannot grow in the dark arena of pressures and of demonstrations of force."

Meanwhile, the day after the election, Quezada and three other workers were fired, this time with Ministry of Labor approval. MACEN director Luis Ocampo said he fired the four because of incidents during the pre-election disputes. Quezada had "brandished a knife in an open attempt to threaten co-workers," and the others had "insulted" a factory administrator, Ocampo said.



Harvey McArthur

Militant/Janet Post

Frame-up victim Mark Curtis is convicted

Continued from front page

tions on Monday morning, September 12. It met all day Monday and Tuesday, without reaching a verdict, which must be unanimous.

At 8:45 a.m. this morning, Curtis' attorney, Mark Pennington, moved in court that a mistrial be declared. Pennington argued that the jury had been meeting for two days and had not been able to make up its mind, which suggested that it was deadlocked, unable to reach agreement. A verdict under those circumstances, warned Pennington, would be the product of undue pressure on the jurors to reach a unanimous decision.

Judge Harry Perkins, who presided over the trial, overruled Pennington's motion, saying that the jury had given him no indication that it was deadlocked, that it was simply being "conscientious" and tackling "a difficult problem." He ruled the jury must continue its deliberations.

An hour later, the jury reached its verdict.

The judge read the verdict and dismissed the jurors. He then ruled that the defense has until September 30 to put forward post-trial motions, including the call for a new trial.

Violations of law mounted as the trial proceeded. These included: the refusal to allow certain evidence to be introduced, the refusal to let the jury rehear testimony, the judge's decision to disqualify one of the jurors at the end of the trial, and testimony from a spectator that another juror was seen fraternizing with the Morris family during the trial.

Curtis' sentencing is scheduled for October 21 at 8:30 a.m. The burglary charge carries a mandatory sentence of 25 years; the sexual abuse charge, a mandatory sentence of 10 years. It's up to the judge's discretion whether they run concurrently or consecutively, and therefore whether he's sentenced to 25 or 35 years.

The day before the sentencing, Judge Perkins set a hearing on the state's presentence investigation. He is supposed to take into account Curtis' background and character in deciding on the sentence and future eligibility for parole.

Since there is no appeal bond permitted for the crimes Curtis was convicted of, he was immediately put in handcuffs and taken to the Polk County Jail, right across the street from the courthouse.

But before leaving, Pennington asked the judge if Curtis could make a statement to his supporters, who were gathered in the courtroom. While noting it was an unusual procedure, Judge Perkins agreed.

"I want to thank everyone here for supporting me in this fight," began Curtis. This conviction, he said, is just the end of one stage in the struggle "that we are going to keep carrying out until we win." This "is not just a blow against me," he said, but "against every working person in Des Moines, in Iowa, and in the entire United States." That's why, he said, thousands of people are supporting him.

"Wherever I am," he vowed, "I'll be carrying on this fight with you. Stay strong everyone." Then the sheriff's deputies led him away.

The courthouse was packed with reporters.

Defense attorney Pennington told the media that while supporters of Curtis were "disappointed," the guilty verdict "was not unexpected." There were "decisions by the court that precluded certain evidence being heard by the jury. It's our position that these matters should have been heard."

Pennington will appeal the decision to the Iowa State Supreme Court.

Stan Curtis, Mark's father, said, "There has been no justice for Mark Curtis today. It is apparently worse to be an honest socialist than a lying and corrupt policeman." Mark, he said, "was presumed guilty and had to prove his innocence, which is an attack on the rights and freedom of all of us."

Assistant County Attorney Catherine Thune, the prosecutor at the trial, told reporters that "what's good" about this verdict is that it was decided by a jury composed of "12 members of our community from all walks of life." There were no Blacks on the jury, only one union member, and Judge Perkins removed the one Hispanic juror when the trial testimony ended. Nine of the 12 jurors were women.

After the verdict came down, Curtis' supporters returned to the defense commit-



Militant/Stu Singer

Cops broke Mark Curtis' cheekbone in March 4 beating. Now Curtis faces charges at October 10 trial of assaulting cops.

tee office to prepare for tonight's meeting. Curtis called from jail. He requested some clothing, photographs, and two books — *Thomas Sankara Speaks* and *Malcolm X Speaks*.

As a result of overcrowding in the Polk County Jail, Curtis was moved later in the day to Marion County Jail, which is in Knoxville, Iowa, less than one hour south-east of Des Moines.

Starting at noon, television channels 8 and 13 repeatedly announced tonight's meeting.

A team of supporters went to talk to workers at the Swift packinghouse, where Curtis worked until he was beaten up by the cops and had to take a medical leave. Many people had already heard the news, especially on the kill-floor where Curtis worked, either on the radio or by word of mouth from supporters in the plant who had called the defense committee office.

The many workers who were rooting for Curtis were stunned and angered by the decision. The few who openly favored a conviction, on the other hand, were emboldened to be more vocal because of the verdict.

Other supporters went to a sit-in being held downtown by farmers fighting a foreclosure. The farmers explained they had been following Curtis' case, and understood the issues as a result of their own struggles against the government and the bankers.

Tomorrow morning, a team of Curtis supporters will hit the road to talk to workers, farmers, and young people all over Iowa, winning new support for Curtis' fight.

International support

Throughout the day, people called in to find out the verdict, express their anger, and pledge their continuing support.

"We protest the frame-up and unjust conviction of Mark Curtis, the committed fighter against apartheid, against racism, and against the oppression and exploitation of working people anywhere in the world. We will be contacting the Iowa authorities to let our outrage be known." That was the message from Peter Mahlangu, North American representative of the South African Congress of Trade Unions.

Six messages were received from supporters in Canada.

Friends of Mark Curtis in Britain phoned in a message: "For six months hundreds of people here in Britain have been involved in the effort to expose and fight the frame-up of Mark Curtis. Hundreds of Irish and Black people, striking miners and print-workers on this side of the Atlantic have fallen victim to the 'justice' that Mark has experienced."

What made Curtis different

Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, the party Curtis is a member of, thanked everyone in Des

Moines and elsewhere who helped organize this defense effort.

Many hundreds of thousands of working people around the world face what Curtis faced, he explained. What made Curtis different is the support he was able to get — he didn't have to face the frame-up, jailing, and beating all alone. The effort led by the Mark Curtis Defense Committee in Des Moines, said Barnes, will win justice for Curtis and deal a blow to police frame-ups everywhere.

Barnes reminded participants that at the September 4 international defense rally here, they had discussed the fact that it was impossible for Curtis to receive a fair trial. And, said Barnes, he didn't.

But "justice will prevail," said Barnes. "Not in the courtroom, but in the court of public opinion of the great majority of humanity. Curtis will be released and Curtis will be vindicated," he said. Channel 13 taped much of the rally and showed clips from Barnes' talk on the news that night and the next morning.

Stu Singer, coordinator of the defense committee, spoke briefly and then introduced John Gaige, who has played a central role in the Curtis defense effort since it began. He presented a balance sheet prepared by the leadership of the defense committee. Gaige traced the history of what the defense effort has accomplished as well as the development of a pro-frame-up campaign, led by the only daily newspaper here, the *Des Moines Register*.

Kate Kaku, treasurer of the defense committee and Curtis' wife, introduced the four members of Curtis' family who were able to stay in Des Moines for the rally. His brother, Paul, decided that he would remain a few more weeks to help out in the defense committee office.

Kaku emphasized the need for more money — the committee has already raised and spent some \$70,000.

Tax deductible contributions can be made to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee through the Political Rights Defense Fund, Inc. The PRDF was set up to raise

funds for the Socialist Workers Party lawsuit against FBI spying, harassment, and disruption. With the final victory in that lawsuit in March 1988, the fund's board of directors decided to grant money earmarked for Curtis' defense to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

Defense committee activists Nan Bailey and Nellie Berry co-chaired tonight's meeting. They introduced from the audience Larry Ginther, an American Agriculture Movement staffwriter in Iowa, and Kathleen Mickells, SWP candidate for U.S. vice-president.

Curtis' attorney, Pennington, sent a message to tonight's rally that read, "I was impressed with the courage Mark Curtis showed. He knew he might be convicted and he took it like a fighter."

"He indicated to me, before the verdict came in, that we did all we could. He's prepared to fight on. He wants to retain me for the appeal and I want to do it."

Noted constitutional attorney Leonard Boudin, who was chief counsel in the SWP's historic lawsuit against the FBI, sent a message that said, "At Mark's request and the request of my longtime client, the Socialist Workers Party, I have followed Curtis' fight, as well as the legal developments leading up to and during the trial."

"The success of the prosecution in excluding relevant and important evidence — including the evidence of FBI surveillance of Mark as part of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, and the evidence of the police beating of Mark while cursing him for his political activities — was a blow to his legal rights."

"I will do whatever I am asked and whatever I am able to collaborate with Mark's attorney, Mark Pennington, to win freedom for Mark and justice for us all."

'Aghast, but not surprised'

Piri Thomas, Puerto Rican poet, author, and activist who had been in Des Moines for the September 4 international defense rally, said, "As a brown man I stand aghast but not surprised at the travesty of justice in the case of Mark Curtis, whose only crime in the eyes of racists is that Mark Curtis stands for justice and human rights, regardless of race or color."

"There is no doubt the world is watching the court system in Des Moines, Iowa..."

The national director of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, Angela Sanbrano, pointed out, "An important element in the frame-up of Mark Curtis was the decision to bar from the courtroom the fact that Mark became an FBI target because of his activities as a leader of CISPES. This morning FBI Director [William] Sessions reported to the Senate that this operation by the FBI exceeded its authority and violated the rights of CISPES and its members, such as Mark."

Messages also came today from Mike Zmolek, Iowa Coalition Against Apartheid; Loretta Ross, director, Women of Color Program, National Organization for Women; Robert Watters, president, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 100; Larry Regan, president, United Steelworkers Local 1014; Carroll Nearnmyer, American Agriculture Movement; and Clyde Brooks, president, Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Chicago.

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The frame-up trial of Mark Curtis: report from Des Moines courtroom

BY MARGARET JAYKO

DES MOINES, Iowa, Sept. 12 — The testimony in the three-day jury trial of political activist Mark Curtis on frame-up charges of sexual abuse — rape — in the third degree, and burglary in the first degree, ended here at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, September 9.

Supporters of Curtis packed Judge Harry Perkins' courtroom at the Polk County Courthouse in downtown Des Moines each day of the trial. The crowd spilled outside into the hallway, and Mark Curtis Defense Committee activists organized an orderly rotation in the spectators' benches so that everyone who showed up could watch at least some of the proceedings.

Curtis' lawyer is Mark Pennington of the law firm Kutmus and Pennington. The prosecution was conducted by Assistant County Attorney Catherine Thune. The trial opened Wednesday, September 7.

Twelve jurors and one alternate were selected that first day. There were no Blacks and only one Latino among the pool of 40 individuals from which the jury was chosen.

In questioning the potential jurors, defense attorney Pennington had cautioned them that while it is a principle of law that the accused is innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, most of the time most people assume the opposite. They assume that if someone is indicted for a crime they probably are guilty and the burden of proof is on them to show that they're innocent.

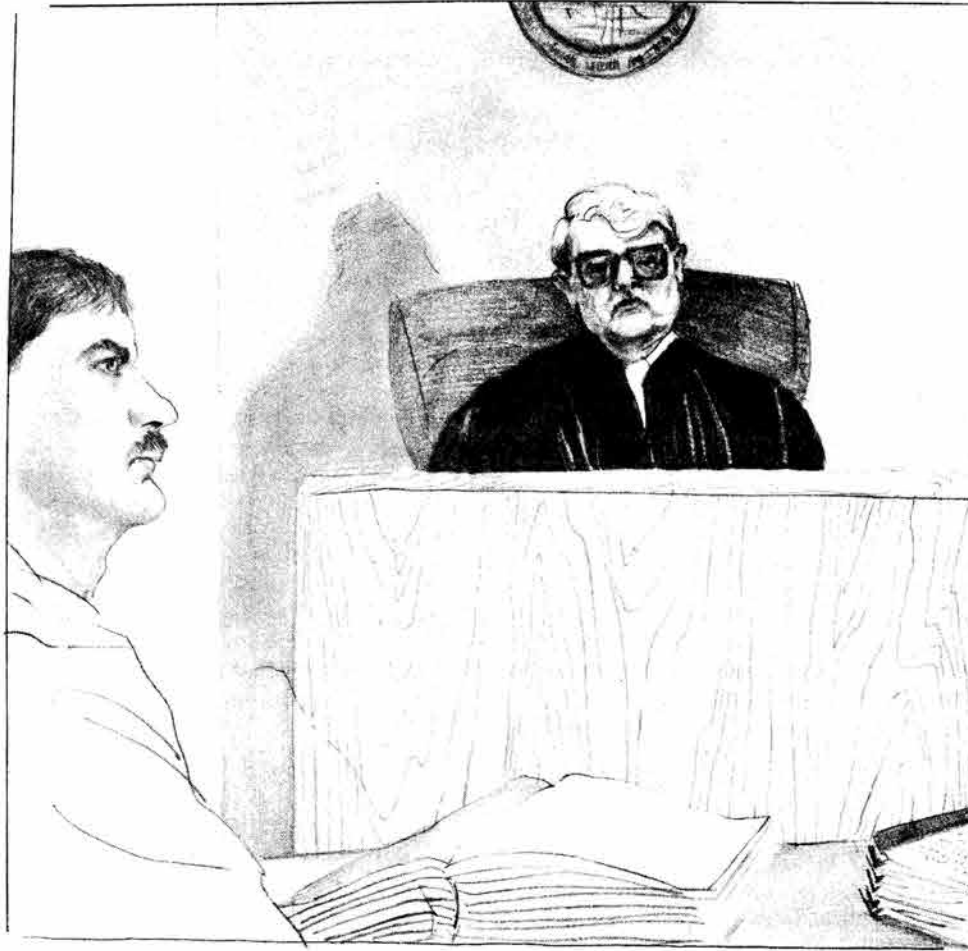
But under the protection of the Bill of Rights, Curtis doesn't have to prove anything, said Pennington. The state's attorney is the one responsible for introducing evidence that establishes conclusively the accused is actually guilty.

The selection of the jury was followed by Thune and Pennington making their opening statements to the court. The prosecution, which put its case on first, called two witnesses on Wednesday: 16-year-old Demetria Morris, and her 12-year-old brother Jason.

Demetria Morris testified that on March 4, 1988 (at that time she was 15 years old), Mark Curtis beat and raped her on the porch of her house here in Des Moines. Morris is Black. Jason Morris (who was 11 at the time), said he saw Curtis force his way onto the porch. He testified that he called the police and then hid in the basement. He said he came up later, saw an attacker lying on top of his sister, and then hid again until the police arrived.

Under cross-examination by Pennington, it was shown that Demetria Morris' testimony contradicted previous statements she had made about the alleged attack, including in a sworn deposition May 31.

On Thursday morning the prosecution put on the rest of its witnesses.



Mark Curtis and Judge Harry Perkins in courtroom

Militant/Rosa Garmendia

A police dispatcher testified that she received a 911 phone call at 8:51 p.m. on March 4 from a young boy whispering that his sister was being raped on the front porch. Thune played a police recording of the alleged phone call.

The second witness that day was arresting officer Joseph Gonzalez.

He testified that he and his partner, Richard Glade, were dispatched to the Morris residence at 8:52 p.m. on March 4 to deal with a rape in progress. Gonzalez said they arrived at the front door 30 seconds later. He told the court he yelled, "Police." The door crept open, and then he pushed it open all the way. A young woman jumped out, he reported, wearing only a sweatshirt. She yelled, "He just raped me."

Gonzalez said he noticed somebody else on the porch pulling up his pants. He then chased the presumed assailant into the back bedroom. When he caught the man, who Gonzalez identified as Mark Curtis, he put his hands on top of the bed and searched him, finding no weapon or wallet. Curtis asked Gonzalez to help him pull up his pants, which the cop refused to do. He instead handcuffed Curtis behind his back. He forced him to pull up and hold his unfastened trousers from behind while his hands were cuffed.

Under questioning from Pennington, Gonzalez admitted that Curtis' car was parked right in front of the Morris' house, "the last place you would park" if you didn't want to be detected by the police, said Pennington.

Demetria Morris had testified that after the cops arrived, she had gone into the back bedroom and saw Curtis sitting on the bed with his pants down. Gonzalez insisted that she hadn't come into the room.

Pennington asked Gonzalez if the reason he wouldn't let Curtis fasten his pants was so that the other cops who arrived would see them open and the story that Curtis was caught with his pants down would be more believable. Gonzalez denied this.

Pennington then asked him if it was true that he was suspended from the force for several days in 1978 by the chief of police for brutalizing a suspect and then lying to cover up his illegal actions. Thune objected to this question and the judge sustained her objection. (See accompanying article on Gonzalez' record.)

Officer Richard Glade, who accompanied Gonzalez to the Morris house that night, testified that he saw Curtis lying flat on his stomach on the floor of the bedroom with his hands cuffed behind him. Glade

said he had run around outside to the back of the house while Gonzalez was apprehending the suspect, to make sure he couldn't escape out of a back door.

A registered nurse in the emergency room at Broadlawn hospital testified that she saw Demetria Morris in the emergency room around 9:15 p.m. on March 4, and that she had one swelling below her left eye and another on her right temple.

The doctor who examined Demetria Morris said there was no medical evidence of rape.

Paul Bush, a "criminalist" from the Division of Criminal Investigation of the state police, affirmed that there was no evidence that there had been any physical contact between Curtis and Demetria Morris.

He reported there was no exchange of pubic hairs between Demetria Morris and Curtis, no dirt was found on his underwear, and no seminal fluid on either him or Demetria Morris.

Bush reported that dog hairs were found on Demetria Morris' clothes, which she said were from her front porch that was full of dog hair. No dog hairs of any kind were found on Curtis' clothes.

Mark Curtis testifies

Most witnesses called by the defense were character witnesses. They presented a compelling picture of a person who had dedicated his life to fighting social and political injustices of every kind. Far from being a violent, deceitful person, witness after witness testified to his gentle and "painfully honest" nature.

The last — and most important — defense witness was Mark Curtis himself.

He began by describing the impact on him of growing up on an Indian reservation. Both of his parents, Jane and Stan, had testified about Mark's upbringing, temperament, and activities as a youth.

Mark Curtis' father works as an educator for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. His mother is a nurse for the U.S. Public Health Service. Living amid the poverty and oppression of Native Americans allowed Curtis to see, at a very young age, the effects of institutionalized racism and class oppression. And his parents' efforts to help the Indians that they lived with for many years "taught me by example that one person can make a difference," Curtis testified.

That's why, after two years in college on a scholarship, Curtis decided to quit school, join the Young Socialist Alliance and Socialist Workers Party, and earn his living as a factory worker. Stan Curtis had

testified that he was upset when his son decided to drop out of school. But since he arrived in Des Moines for the trial, Stan Curtis said he saw how many people are supporting his son. He now understands that Mark's work "is as important as mine."

Prosecuting attorney Thune responded that it wasn't true that everyone in the courtroom was backing Mark Curtis. That's correct, acknowledged Stan Curtis, but "there's a lot more people here than there would have been if he wasn't a strong political leader."

Mark Curtis testified that in 1981 he moved to Birmingham, Alabama, and got a job as a mechanic at Hayes Aircraft. He was active in the local of the United Auto Workers union there. He helped get the members involved in matters directly related to conditions in the plant, and other issues that are of concern to working people, such as U.S. intervention in Central America and protests against attacks on the rights of Blacks and women.

Curtis moved to New York in 1984 to work in the national office of the Young Socialist Alliance. That's where he met Kate Kaku, another YSA member. They moved to Des Moines together in November 1986.

Curtis got a job at the Swift packing-house here and Kaku got one at Oscar Mayer in nearby Perry.

It was "the hardest job I ever had," testified Curtis. He had to pull 2,400 heavy cattle paunches a day. It is dangerous, hot and filthy work.

Curtis was active in United Food and Commercial Workers Local 431 at Swift. A previous defense witness who also works at Swift, Ellen Whitt, had testified that the local's officials are based in Davenport, Iowa, which is more than 150 miles from Des Moines. These officials appoint the chief shop steward at Swift. Local 431 is an amalgamated local, which organizes workers at 110 different plants over a broad geographic location. The union's presence at Swift is relatively weak and Curtis tried to involve other workers to make the local stronger.

Curtis was also involved in solidarity activities with meat-packers and other workers who were on strike. He participated in a march February 20 in the Des Moines suburb of Clive against police racism, an action that ended up at police headquarters.

Immigration raid

Curtis then described the events that immediately preceded his arrest. On March 1, 17 Swift workers, 16 Mexicans and one Salvadoran, were pulled off the line at the plant and arrested by immigration cops for not having proper papers. This angered him, said Curtis. Those arrested — many of whom had already applied for amnesty under the federal government's program — weren't even allowed to call their families. The raid sparked a big discussion in the plant and in the city, he recalled.

Mexican-American activists scheduled a protest meeting for March 4 at 2:00 p.m. The company initially said workers could have time off to go to the meeting. But at noon that day, management changed its mind and said people couldn't go. Several workers walked off the line and said they were going anyway. This stopped production — a very unusual event at Swift.

Company personnel responded by getting another meeting called for after work that day so those who wanted to could attend.

The meeting occurred at 5:00 p.m. at the United Mexican-American Cultural Center. Several Swift workers attended. Curtis testified that he spoke at the meeting, in Spanish, about the need to get the union involved in fighting for the rights of these members.

After it was over, "I felt great," said Curtis. The solidarity with these immigrant workers showed the real potential for strengthening the union at the plant.

After the meeting, Curtis and others went to Los Compadres, a restaurant and bar near the plant where a lot of workers go to cash their paychecks and relax. Curtis

CANADA

Justice for Mark Curtis An Injury to One Is an Injury to All!

Across Canada and around the world, support grows for Mark Curtis, union and antiwar activist framed up by the Des Moines, Iowa, police.

Speaker:

Steve Penner, executive secretary of the Revolutionary Workers League, attended Curtis trial.

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Militant/Yvonne Hayes

Curtis' attorney Mark Pennington presents closing arguments to jury on September 9.

sat down with some friends to tell them about the meeting. One of them, Brian Willey, testified for the defense.

Willey told the court that Curtis came in around 7:00 p.m. and stayed to drink a few beers. Curtis talked to Willey and others about the meeting and then left at 8:30.

Given the number of things he had to do that night, testified Curtis, he had really stayed a little too long.

He needed to deposit his wife's paycheck, organize a forum the following night, buy food to cook a preform dinner, and entertain two friends in from Decorah, Iowa, who were planning to show up at his house after 9:00 p.m. Kaku was at work — she's on the 4:00 p.m. to midnight shift — so Curtis had to be home to let in their friends Myung Kim and Kevin Magee.

It took him 10 minutes or so to get home from Los Compadres, said Curtis. Then he called a couple of friends to ask them to let in Kim and Magee in case they arrived while he was at the grocery store. Both Jackie Floyd and Ellen Whitt testified that they did receive a call from Curtis that night. Floyd recalled the call came right at 8:45 p.m., because she works evenings and she checked the clock to see how soon she would have to leave.

How Curtis ended up at Morris' house

After the phone calls, Curtis left his house, got in his car, and started to drive to the Hy-Vee grocery store. He stopped at a red light on the corner of Clark and Harding. A young woman tapped on the hood of his car, waved at him, and walked around to the driver's side. She was a light-skinned Black woman, about 18 or 19 years old.

She was very upset, Curtis recounted, and pleaded with him to give her a ride home, saying that a man at the nearby TNT bar was after her. Curtis said he was concerned because a woman had been shot in that bar not long before.

He let her in the car and offered to call the police. She didn't want him to call the cops and begged him to just drive her home. She gave him directions to what turned out to be the Morris' house. She then asked him to park the car and go up to the porch of the house with her because she was afraid the guy might be inside.

She went into the house while he waited on the porch. A minute later, Curtis heard a noise behind him and the front door flew open. He figured this was the man who was after her. He got scared and jumped into the house through the inside door the woman had left open.

But the guys who came in were cops, said Curtis. One grabbed him by the arm and shouted, "I got him." Curtis assumed the woman had called the cops and they mistakenly thought he was the guy who was after her. The police officer walked him through the living room into the back bedroom.

He handcuffed Curtis behind his back and sat him down on the bed. Then the cop pushed Curtis back onto the bed, undid his pants and pulled them down. The cop said, "Let's see what we got here." He took Curtis' keys and wallet out of his pocket. He held up a key and asked Curtis if it was the key to his car.

Then he told Curtis he was under arrest and read him his rights. He wouldn't help Curtis pull up his pants, so Curtis had to hold them up from the back, leaving them

unfastened. Curtis saw the other cop as he was being taken out of the house.

Curtis said he never saw Demetria Morris that night. The first time he ever saw her was at the deposition in late May. She wasn't the woman who had flagged him down — Curtis has never seen that woman again.

Curtis explained that he's spent the past 12 years of his life fighting for women's rights. He testified that one reason the rape charge hurt him so much, and one reason he devoted his life to fighting for the kind of world where such abuse won't happen, was because one of his sisters had been raped.

The prosecution objected to Pennington pursuing this topic and was sustained by the judge.

Curtis said he didn't know why Demetria Morris is accusing him of this crime. After hearing her testimony, he said he thought it was very possible that something terrible did happen to her that night. But he wasn't the one who did it.

Thune used her cross-examination to try to impeach Curtis' character.

She first questioned his credentials as a union activist. She asked him when he had stopped paying dues to UFCW Local 431. Curtis started to explain that it was after March 4, because he was on a medical leave. But Judge Perkins had ruled in a pre-trial hearing, at the prosecution's request, that no evidence could be introduced at the trial about the beating Curtis received at the hands of police officers when he was in jail, which caused him to need the medical leave. Curtis will go on trial again October 10, when he will face charges of assaulting the police who attacked him the night of his arrest. Judge Perkins ordered Curtis to restrict his answer to Thune's question to simply the date he stopped paying dues.

Thune tried to establish that Curtis wasn't an elected official of the Socialist Workers Party in Des Moines. He explained that he was elected both as the director of the Des Moines Militant Labor Forum series and as the financial director of the SWP branch in the city.

The prosecutor then tried to impeach Curtis' character. She produced an official court document that he had filled out the day after he had been arrested and beaten. He had checked that he was single, not married. Curtis responded that he and Kate Kaku didn't have a marriage license; they have a common-law marriage.

Thune asked Curtis why he had been fired from his job at Hayes Aircraft in 1985. "Because of my political and union activity," he answered. She said that in fact it had been because he falsified his employment application. Curtis pointed out he had been looking for the job at the height of the 1981-82 economic recession and he had added a little extra work experience to the application in order to get the job.

Thune pointed out there was soil on the jeans Curtis was wearing on March 4. But there was no evidence that it was the same soil that was on the Morris' porch. These were jeans he had worn to work.

The prosecution then tried to find a factual contradiction in Curtis' account of what happened the night of March 4. She said that in a speech he gave at Drake University on March 14, he had said that he saw the woman who flagged him down coming out of the TNT lounge. But Curtis

had in his pocket the text of the speech he gave that day, and offered to read that section into the record. Thune stopped him, telling the judge she didn't want him to read it.

Demetria Morris had testified in her May deposition that five minutes before her assailant came to the front door, she had received a strange phone call. It was a man's voice asking if Bonita, Denise, or Keith were home. Denise and Keith are the names of Demetria's parents who live at the house.

A private investigator for the defense had found a Bonita Brown. She was a former neighbor of Curtis'. She and her boyfriend, Keith Morrison, had moved to a house near the Morris' on March 3 and 4.

Thune asked Curtis if it wasn't true that he had called and then gone by the Morris house on March 4 to find Bonita and/or Keith Morrison — looking, Thune insinuated, for drugs or sex. When instead he found Demetria Morris, he raped her. Curtis denied this.

Under questioning by Pennington, Curtis explained that he didn't know Bonita Brown and Keith Morrison, and that he doesn't use drugs. In fact, he explained, you can't be a member of the YSA or SWP and use illegal drugs.

After the defense rested its case, the prosecution had the right to call any additional witnesses it wanted to. Thune called Bonita Brown to the stand in order to establish some connection between her and Keith Morrison, and Mark Curtis. But Brown testified that beyond being his neighbor, she barely knew who Curtis was, and there'd be no reason for him to come to her house that night.

In her summary, Thune said that Curtis is trying to hide behind his political activity to cover up the crime he committed. She said that Curtis claims that the charges against him are a conspiracy. But, she asked rhetorically, how could the Morris family know what Curtis' plans were that night, where he would be, and that he would pick up this woman. And how would the cops know that the Morris family would cooperate if the cops initiated the conspiracy?

Conceding that police do sometimes frame people up, Thune argued that it would have been much easier to simply plant a gun or knife on Curtis, or throw some drugs into his car and arrest him.

Did Curtis do it?

Pennington began his summary by pointing out that he hadn't claimed there was any conspiracy to get Curtis. He explained that no conspiracy theory is necessary to Curtis's defense, or in showing the failure of the state of Iowa to prove his guilt.

Pennington echoed Curtis' opinion that something tragic did occur in that house that night. But the issue, he pointed out, was Did Curtis do it?

Pennington then reviewed all the other evidence that had been presented that could shed light on the question *Who* assaulted Demetria Morris on March 4?

- The hospital records record Demetria Morris stating her attacker was 5'6. Curtis is 6'2.

- Demetria Morris stated her attacker had smoke on his breath. Curtis does not

Continued on next page

What Mark Curtis did on March 4

At the September 7-9 trial of Mark Curtis on charges of sexual abuse and burglary, Demetria Morris, the alleged victim, testified that on the evening of March 4, 1988, when one of her favorite television shows had just begun, a man called on the telephone asking for Bonita, Denise, or Keith. The show began at 8:00 p.m. She told the caller that her parents, Denise and Keith, weren't home.

Five or 10 minutes later, a man knocked on the door, asking for the same people. Demetria Morris opened the door, started talking to him, and he proceeded to sexually molest and beat her until the cops arrived. She testified the man who did this was Mark Curtis. Below is a chronology, constructed from eyewitness evidence presented at the trial, of what Mark Curtis did that day and where he was at the time the alleged rape took place.

7:00 a.m. Curtis leaves home for work at Swift Packinghouse in Des Moines.

2:00 p.m. Several Swift workers walk off production line to protest management decision to not allow them to go to 2:00 p.m. meeting to protest in-plant arrest three days earlier of 17 Latino workers by immigration cops. Line stopped for 10 minutes.

4:45 p.m. Curtis gets off work for the day.

5:00 p.m. Meeting at United Mexican-American Cultural Center to protest arrest of Swift 17. Curtis speaks at meeting, in Spanish, about need to involve the union at Swift, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 431, in fight to defend these workers. The meeting approved a call for a demonstration March 12 to protest arrests.

7:00 p.m. Curtis arrives at Los Compadres bar and restaurant after Swift 17 protest meeting. Talks to two friends from Swift plant about the meeting and plans for the following week's protest.

8:30 p.m. Curtis leaves Los Compadres and drives home.

8:40-8:45 p.m. Curtis calls friend Ellen Whitt and leaves message on her answering machine that he's going out for a few minutes and could she please let two friends of his who are coming over to visit him into her house if they show up before he gets back. Since Whitt isn't home, he calls neighbor Jackie Floyd. Tells her and Whitt, who was with Floyd, that he is going to store to buy food to cook dinner for people attending Militant Labor Forum the next night.

8:45-8:50 p.m. Curtis leaves house to go to Hy-Vee grocery store. Woman stops Curtis at traffic light on corner of Clark and Harding, five blocks from his house, and asks for ride home because a man is chasing her. Curtis gives her lift to what turns out to be the Morris house. She asks him to wait on porch while she goes inside.

8:51 p.m. Police say they receive a 911 emergency call from someone whispering that his sister was being raped on the porch.

8:52 p.m. Police testify they dispatch car to house.

8:53 p.m. Police officer Gonzalez testifies cops arrive within 30 seconds. According to Curtis, a minute or two after he walks up to porch, cops arrive, burst onto porch, and Gonzalez grabs him. They handcuff Curtis, pull down his pants, and arrest him on rape charges. —M.J.

Courtroom report from Des Moines

Continued from previous page smoke.

- No soil was found on Curtis' underwear, despite Demetria Morris' description of him rolling around on the floor of a dirty porch with his pants down.

- There were neither any animal hairs nor any hairs of somebody Black found on Curtis or his clothing.

- In the prosecutor's opening statement, she had made a direct link between a "strange phone call" Demetria Morris received that night and the attack.

Demetria Morris had testified in her sworn deposition that the phone call came just as a favorite television show was beginning. That show started at 8:00 p.m. that night. Five minutes later, she stated, a man knocked on the door who then raped her. Both the caller and the man at the door, she stated, asked for Bonita, Keith, or Denise. She had told the man on the phone that her parents weren't home.

On the witness stand at the trial, she testified that she was no longer sure that any of those statements were accurate.

If it was her attacker who called, Pennington pointed out, he would have wanted to get over to the house right away before her parents or anyone else showed up. When the attack occurred, Mark Curtis was in a bar with his friends.

Pennington then conceded that if it were true that Gonzalez found Curtis with his pants down, and Demetria Morris had just been assaulted, it would be strong evidence Curtis is guilty of both sexual abuse and burglary charges.

According to Curtis, however, the cops set him up. "Why would two police officers do that to Mark Curtis?" asked Pennington.

It's not necessary to believe there was a grand political conspiracy to believe that cops sometimes bend the law and fix evidence. So Gonzalez pulled down Curtis's pants.

No unexplained absences

Pennington explained that while Mark Curtis' version of what happened that night is "not likely," the question is Did it in fact occur that way? Pennington noted that in the defense version of events there are no unexplained absences of Curtis at any time that night, and no unusual behavior on his part.

Pennington discussed the implausibility of the prosecution's story. March 4, as had been testified to extensively, was a special day for Mark Curtis. Why would he choose on that day to go to a house of a family he didn't even know? If the state's story were true, Curtis, on his way to find a Bonita Brown, whom he doesn't know, stopped at another house, and in a wild, impulsive act, decided to rape the young woman who happened to answer the door.

All the character testimony, as well as the evidence about the time the alleged crime took place, casts more than a reasonable doubt on this account of events.

The fact that the prosecution, combing

through the background of Curtis' entire life, couldn't find one fact that could impeach the substantial amount of evidence introduced by the character witnesses, would be grounds for acquitting Curtis, said Pennington.

Pennington concluded by pointing out that if Curtis was innocent, there was nothing more the defense could do than it had done to establish, well beyond a reasonable doubt, that Mark Curtis is not guilty as charged.

Prosecuting attorney Thune then gave a rebuttal to Pennington's summary, which he had no opportunity to answer.

As for all the factual inconsistencies in the prosecution's case, she said "the beauty of our system" is that it was up to the jury to decide how to reconcile those contradictions.

And she repeated her point that it would be impossible for a "Black, working class family" to organize such a frame-up.

Judge's instructions

The judge then gave the jurors a series of instructions to guide their deliberations.

He reviewed their responsibility under the law to presume Curtis innocent unless the prosecution has established Curtis' guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

In order to find Curtis guilty of sexual abuse in the third degree, the jury must find proof that he performed sexual acts on Demetria Morris against her will.

The jury might choose to find him guilty of the lesser charge of assault.

Curtis could be found guilty of burglary in the first degree, burglary in the second degree, or criminal trespass.

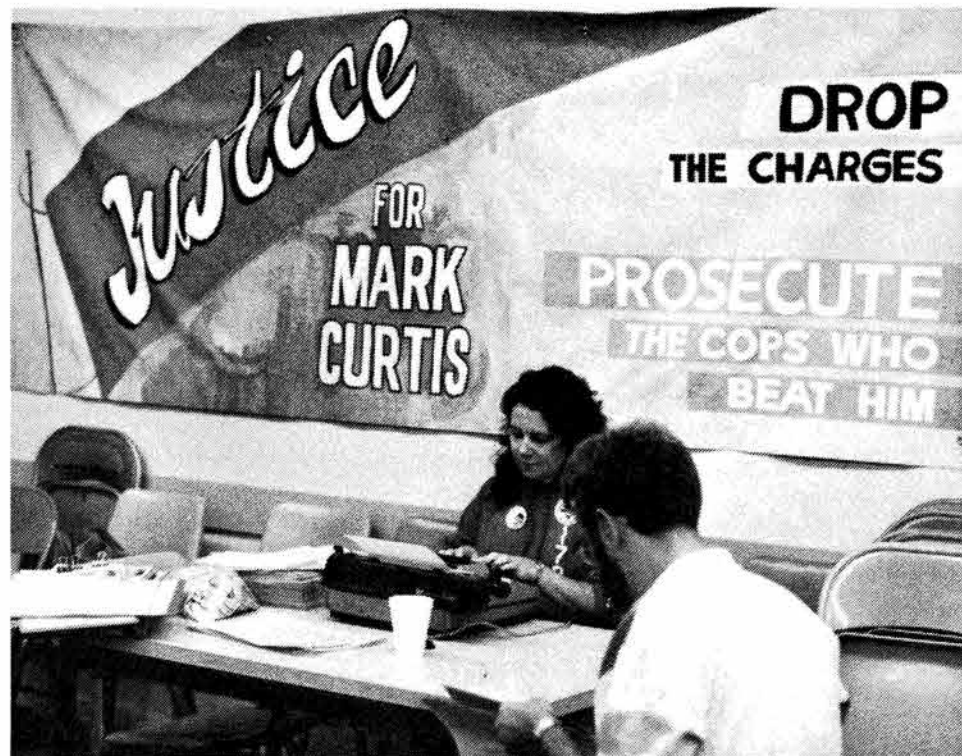
Or the jury can find him not guilty of any crime.

The decision, said the judge, must be unanimous.

Just as the judge was about to dismiss the jury for it to begin its deliberations, James Garcia, a retired auto worker and the only Hispanic juror, raised his hand and said he didn't think he would be able to make a fair judgement in the case because he was familiar with some of the places mentioned, such as the United Mexican-American Cultural Center and Los Compadres bar.

On Monday morning, the judge dismissed Garcia and seated the alternate juror. The jury was then comprised only of white Anglos. Nine were women and three men. Defense attorney Pennington objected, pointing out that there was nothing in what Garcia said that would indicate that he couldn't serve on the jury. Pennington moved that a mistrial be declared. Judge Perkins said he would reserve ruling on that motion until after the jury has returned its verdict.

Another irregularity was also brought to the judge's attention Monday morning. On Friday spectator Patricia Habermann had seen one of the jurors standing with the Morris family. On this also the judge said that he wouldn't rule until after the jury returned its verdict.



Militant/Yvonne Hayes

Curtis defense committee activists at work. Supporters of Curtis filled courtroom and hallway outside each day of trial.

Police officer Gonzalez under cross-examination

DES MOINES, Iowa — A key witness for the prosecutor in the trial of Mark Curtis on charges of sexual abuse and burglary was Des Moines police officer Joseph Gonzalez. He testified that on the evening of March 4, 1988, he saw Curtis, with his pants down, on the porch of the house where Demetria Morris lives. Gonzalez was the arresting officer that night.

Curtis' story is quite different. He explained he was on the porch — with his pants up — at the urging of a young woman who said a man was after her and she wanted Curtis to wait for her while she checked inside to see if the man was there. When Gonzalez arrived at the house, he marched Curtis into the back bedroom, handcuffed him behind his back, and pulled down his pants.

Who's telling the truth?

Curtis' attorney, Mark Pennington, under cross-examination, questioned Gonzalez' credibility. "Who's Wendall Nichols?" Pennington asked.

"Ex-police chief," responded Gonzalez. Didn't Nichols suspend Gonzalez for several days in 1978 for lying? Pennington continued.

At that point, Assistant Polk County Attorney Catherine Thune, the prosecutor, objected. Judge Harry Perkins called the two lawyers and Gonzalez into his chambers.

Thune then asked Gonzalez what was behind the incident. He replied that he had been protecting a cop informer.

When they reemerged, Thune's objection was sustained and the judge directed jurors to disregard Pennington's question.

This ruling was consistent with a previous one made by Judge Anthony Critelli on June 30 to deny a motion by Pennington to

produce the Des Moines Police Department personnel files on Gonzalez.

What did Gonzalez do in 1978 that the defense wanted to introduce into evidence?

"Des Moines Police Chief Wendell Nichols said Wednesday he feels he took appropriate action against two police officers who were accused of using unnecessary force in arresting two men in March." So began a report in the May 24, 1978, *Des Moines Register*, written by Rox Laird. The Mark Curtis Defense Committee has been distributing copies of this article.

It continues: "As a result of the incident, in which one of the men arrested suffered a head injury, Nichols disciplined four officers, including placing one on probation for a year, delaying one's merit pay increase, and suspending all four for periods ranging from two to 14 days."

The officer put on one-year's probation was Joseph Gonzalez.

The charges stemmed from an incident on March 31 of that year in Grandview Park. Two 18-year-old men were arrested when officers Gonzalez and David Foreman responded to a report of "crowd disturbances" in the park. John Walte was assaulted by Foreman.

Then, when the two teenagers were being booked at police headquarters, "Gonzalez attempted to provoke (Walte) into a fight" according to an account by Assistant City Attorney James Sullivan, resulting in a head injury to Walte.

Gonzalez, who at that time was 25, was suspended for four days for using unnecessary force and 10 days for "lying" about details of the incident. "I also put Gonzalez on probation for one year," police chief Nichols was quoted as saying, "and if he screws up one more time, I'll fire him. I told him that."

—M.J.

Protest messages from farmers, unionists around the world

Support for Mark Curtis' fight for justice is growing around the world. During the three-day trial in Des Moines where the union and political activist faced trumped-up rape and burglary charges, messages from trade unionists, farmers, and others demanding an end to this frame-up continued to pour into the offices of Polk County prosecutor James Smith.

A few of those statements are excerpted below.

This country was founded on freedom of speech, freedom of religion, the right to have a fair trial, to be innocent before proven guilty beyond a shadow of doubt. Has all this disappeared?

We have been active participants in the farm crisis for many years. We have stood with farmers losing their land because of agricultural policy that forces us to sell our

products under our cost of production. We then cannot make payments on our farms and in come the big lending institutions that foreclose on us, forcing us into a court system that is totally unfair.

We have seen farmers arrested, jailed, and convicted for "trespassing" on their own farms while "officers of the law" destroyed machinery and killed livestock. We have seen evidence for the banks allowed in courtrooms while evidence for the farmer is not allowed. We have seen farmers denied of all rights.

These experiences have made it easier for us to understand Mark's fight. We have stood with farmers fighting injustice and now we stand with Mark Curtis. Drop the charges! Prosecute the cops who beat him!

George Paris, program director, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assis-

Continued on Page 11



FBI on Trial: The Victory in the Socialist Workers Party Suit Against Government Spying
Editor: Margaret Jayko
\$8.95, 260 pp.

Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom
by Nelson Blackstock
\$7.95, 190 pp.

Available from: Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. • 47 The Cut, London, SE1 8LL England • P.O. Box 153 Glebe, Sydney NSW 2037, Australia • 410 Adelaide St. W., Suite 400, Toronto M5V 1S8, Canada. Add 75¢ for handling.

Curtis defense group's efforts are nonstop

BY NORTON SANDLER

DES MOINES, Iowa — Mark Curtis Defense Committee supporters in this city are conducting an international campaign to defeat the frame-up of this unionist and political activist.

In the days leading up to and during Mark Curtis' trial, daily meetings were held at the defense committee offices, which are located in the Pathfinder bookstore here.

Participants included activists from Des Moines and many other U.S. cities as well as Toronto and Montreal in Canada. The character witnesses for the defense participated in many defense committee events that week.

Mark Curtis' parents, Stan and Jane, and brothers and sisters Paul, John, and Susann, from New Mexico, participated throughout the week. Curtis' grandmother, Berta Behrend, and cousin Joni Funk, came from South Dakota. His uncle, Bill Behrend, was here from Chicago.

Outreach efforts to publicize the facts about Curtis' frame-up were nonstop. Teams of volunteers went to plant gates, campuses, working-class neighborhoods, and shopping centers in Des Moines. Outlying plant gates and campuses were also visited. On Saturdays and Sundays, up to 45 volunteers — some who came in for the weekend from as far away as Kansas City, Omaha, and Austin, Minnesota — were on the streets talking about Curtis' fight for justice.

Héctor Marroquín, a Mexican-born leader of the Socialist Workers Party who has been fighting for 11 years to win permanent residency in the United States and John Studer, director of the Marroquín Defense Committee, helped organize the week's activities. Studer told supporters that it was only through this kind of effort that "the light of day could be forced to shine" in the courtroom during Curtis' frame-up trial.

At the evening gatherings supporters discussed the day's developments at the Polk County Courthouse and the rapidly accelerating international campaign to defend Curtis. They also evaluated that day's outreach and planned the next steps.

International support

The international support for Curtis grew throughout the week. Nine organizations in Mexico and 50 individuals sent a letter to Polk County Attorney James Smith demanding that the charges against Curtis be dropped. The effort was organized by the Permanent Seminar for Chicano and Border Studies in Coyoacán, Mexico.

In Britain, while attending the annual conference of the Trades Union Congress, top officials of several of the largest unions in the country signed the defense committee petitions. Some 180 miners and their family members at the Nottinghamshire, England, miners' festival also signed petitions.

Steve Penner, executive secretary of the Revolutionary Workers League in Canada, reported to the committee the breadth of support Curtis is winning in that country.

The daily discussions also reflected the growing support for Curtis across the United States as well as in Iowa itself.

Mitchel Rosenberg explained that he had been assigned to attend the trial as an official representative of the 4,000-member United Steelworkers of America Local 1014 in Gary, Indiana.

Harold Dunkelberger, an Iowa farmer, attended an afternoon session of the trial. That morning he had joined other farmers in protesting a bank's attempt to drive a family off their land near Perry, Iowa.

A team visited the Farmstead Food meat packing plant in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The previous week packinghouse workers there staged a three-day walkout against a new attendance policy. Eighty-five signed the Curtis defense petition. A young worker took five copies with him and pledged to sign up his family, friends, and coworkers.

United Food and Commercial Workers union organizer T.J. Lauritsen at the Excel meat-packing plant in Ottumwa, Iowa, gave a defense committee activist a handwritten message of solidarity to deliver to Mark Curtis. That plant was formerly owned by Hormel.

Unionists who work in Perry at the Oscar Mayer plant; in Des Moines at Swift;

and here at a Teamster-organized spice plant and a United Auto Workers-organized vending machine plant gave updates on what was being discussed about the case at their workplaces.

Curtis family members and other supporters were welcomed and spoke at the New Friendship Church of God in Christ in the Black community here. Richard Daye, the pastor of that church, dedicated two sermons to Mark Curtis' fight for justice.

Outreach teams

In the neighborhood near the defense committee offices, many residents purchased copies of the *Militant* which reported on the September 4 international Curtis defense rally and the first day of the trial. One of the high salespeople on Saturday was John Curtis. He encouraged people to buy the paper because of its truthful coverage of his brother's fight.

Volunteers reported meeting many working people who have been victims of police brutality.

At Drake University supporters talked to a number of cafeteria and maintenance workers who signed petitions. Four Drake students attended defense committee functions during the week.

Outreach teams also talked to working people at the huge Agricultural-Expo in Amana; an Art Festival in Boone; and at meetings of United Auto Workers District 4 Skilled Trades Council and the National Farmers Union.

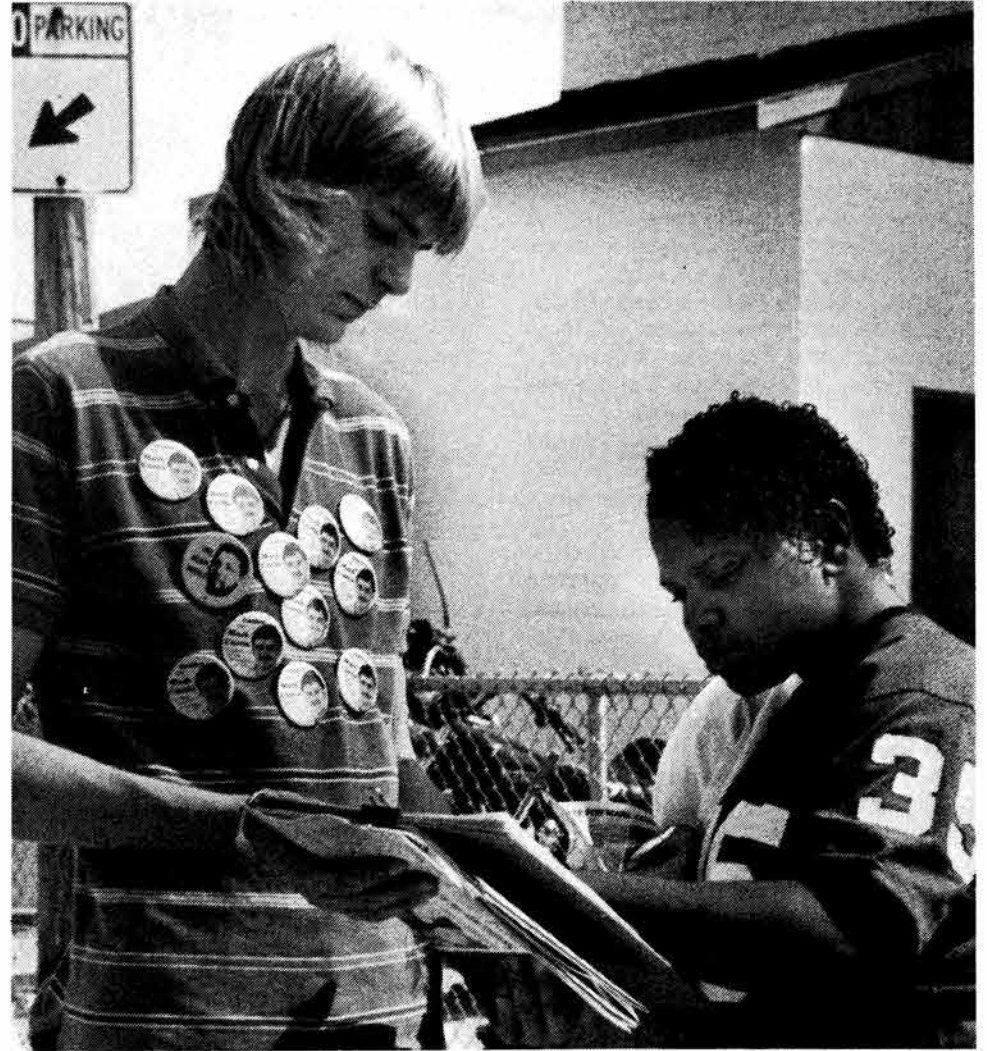
Many people learned of Curtis' fight through media coverage of the trial and defense committee efforts.

Committee activist Nan Bailey, who is also Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress in the 4th Congressional District, summarized the results of the publicity team to a Saturday meeting, reporting that the majority of Des Moines working people are supportive. Others were hostile to Curtis and refused to look at defense committee literature.

Volunteers helped arrange transportation to and from the courthouse and encouraged activists to attend the trial.

Merle Hansen attends trial

Merle Hansen, a leader of the North American Farm Alliance attended two days of the trial. Also attending were Iowa farmer George Naylor; Edna Griffin, a veteran Des Moines civil rights fighter; James Warren, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president; Charles Hayes, deacon of New Friendship Church of God in Christ; Jack Barnes, SWP national secretary; and Iowa defense committee supporters Hazel Zimmerman, Myung Kim, Julia



Militant/Linda Marcus

Curtis' brother John (left) helped get signatures on defense committee petitions and distributed literature at Swift plant gate September 10. Many of Mark Curtis' co-workers at meat-packing plant are actively backing his fight against the frame-up by Des Moines cops.

Terrell, Ruth Roberts, Robert and Nellie Berry, Melissa Garfield, Larry Carter, Paul Schwink, Kevin Magee, Stu Singer, and Elena Floyd.

The defense committee office was kept open while the trial was in progress.

Black students from North High and a worker from Swift were among several people who stopped by to get information.

Among the dozens who called in to find out what was happening in the courtroom were Ed Long, a striking member of United Paperworkers International Union Local 1787 in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania, and Cindy Bennett who is on strike at the International Paper Mill in Jay, Maine. Long and Bennett were among the speakers at the September 4 support rally here. Others calling in for information included University of Iowa political activists Mike

Zmolek and Cathrine Walsh; and Iowa American Agriculture Movement, Inc. leader Larry Ginther.

A team of volunteers staffed the phones at night and on weekends to raise urgently needed funds. Adjua Adams, who helped organize the effort, reported that more than \$6,000 in contributions and pledges was raised on top of the \$11,000 collected at the rally. This brings to \$75,000 the total raised by the committee since Curtis' arrest. Several outreach teams also brought back modest contributions from people they met.

As activists staffed phones, stuffed envelopes and photocopied literature, they watched a video tape of the September 4 defense rally and the television series, "Eyes on the Prize," the story of the U.S. civil rights movement.

'Mark Curtis has a lot of courage'

BY NORTON SANDLER

DES MOINES, Iowa — During lunch breaks at the Swift beef-packing plant, Marian Carr would call the Mark Curtis Defense Committee offices to get updates on what was happening in Curtis' trial at the Polk County Courthouse here.

In the lunchroom and again in the beef-kill, Carr would give small groups of co-workers reports on what she'd learned. "The week of the trial," said Carr, "there was high interest. In some cases people were following it as closely as the supporters who come to the evening meetings." She was referring to the nightly defense committee meetings.

Curtis worked at Swift until his arrest on March 4. That night he was beaten by the cops in city jail and framed up on rape and burglary charges. Curtis has been on medical leave from Swift since the beating.

Many at the plant know Curtis. After the prosecution began presenting its case against him on the first day of the trial, one woman told Carr, "Mark didn't commit that rape."

Another of Carr's coworkers who strongly disagrees with Curtis' political views told her that workers don't get a fair shake in court.

Several Swift workers, Carr emphasized, "Have a feeling for the stakes in this fight and respect people willing to take on the police."

This sentiment was shared by Carmen, a

Mexican-born Swift worker who attended two defense committee meetings during the week. "Workers at Swift have their opinions about this case," said Carmen. "They have had their experiences with the police. They think Mark has a lot of courage doing what he's doing."

Some workers at Swift have circulated petitions demanding that the charges against Curtis be dropped and the cops who beat him be prosecuted. Their efforts have been complemented by other supporters who campaign for Curtis outside the plant at shift changes.

There was a bigger than usual crowd at the front of the Swift parking lot during shift change on Saturday, September 10.

Eight supporters of Mark Curtis, including his brothers John and Paul, went to the plant to distribute materials, circulate petitions, and raise funds. John and Paul Curtis live in Santa Fe, New Mexico. John, 21, is a drummer in the Violet Hour pop band. Paul, 19, is a student at a community college.

By Saturday afternoon many workers were exhausted and in a hurry to get to their cars. But a substantial number stopped for a minute. After shaking hands with John, one woman said, "Tell Mark hi." She has circulated petitions for Curtis in the plant.

A Black worker asked John why the cops were after Mark. "He's been active in the union trying to make things better here," John responded. After listening seri-

ously for a couple of minutes, the unionist signed the petition.

Several Latino workers stopped to talk. "Ellos son los hermanos de Marcos" ("These are Mark's brothers"), defense committee activist Nan Bailey said, introducing John and Paul.

After leaving Swift, the delegation of Curtis supporters went to Los Compadres tavern and restaurant a couple blocks away. They were joined there by Curtis' sister Susann, 23, also a student in Santa Fe. Swift workers and others hang out at Los Compadres. One man who approached the group said his son was also being harassed by the police.

Speaking in Spanish, two Latino workers explained that they knew Mark Curtis. Juan told the group that he and Mark had been hired the same day and that Curtis had helped translate into Spanish some of the questions on Swift's job application. He and Curtis had later been assigned to work on the kill floor.

Pablo said he had talked with Mark at Los Compadres. Curtis, he said, was a target of the police "because he stood up for workers' rights." Pablo gave the defense committee a small donation.

By the end of the afternoon, a couple dozen workers signed Curtis defense committee petitions. A few purchased the committee's new button that reads "Justice for Mark Curtis, an injury to one is an injury to all."

A discussion with Leonard Peltier

Background to frame-up of imprisoned Native-American activist

BY STEVE MARSHALL

LEAVENWORTH, Kan. — The iron gates of federal prison closed behind Leonard Peltier 12 years ago.

The government frame-up that convicted him has been exposed in open court, but the 43-year-old Lakota-Chippewa Indian remains behind bars.

Peltier's treatment is the subject of international attention. Newspapers and governments around the world say it illustrates the hypocrisy of Washington's preachings on democracy and human rights.

Concerts by country and rock singers have raised thousands of dollars for Peltier's defense — and have been the target of shouting, picketing cops.

In the visiting room of the federal penitentiary here, under the mirrored sunglasses of a grim-faced guard, Leonard Peltier recently discussed his case and developments in world politics.

Peltier was convicted in 1977 of murdering two FBI agents on the Pine Ridge Sioux reservation in South Dakota.

The Pine Ridge events took place in the context of the Native American struggle that arose during the late 1960s and early 1970s. A new generation of young American Indians, Peltier explained, rebelled against the centuries-old oppression of their people, both in the cities and on the reservations.

'Red niggers'

"We had no choice," he recalled. "Conditions were terrible." The Chippewa and Sioux reservations in North Dakota, where he was raised, choked in the permanent grip of economic depression: unemployment, subminimum wages, and inferior medical care and education.

"There was a dual justice system," he continued, that routinely violated sovereign treaty rights and allowed corporations to steal Indian lands and resources. This exploitation was reinforced by discrimination and police violence.

"The cops called us 'red niggers,'" Peltier said. "They were always messing with us." A gang of cops inflicted a savage beating on a handcuffed, teenage Peltier for the "crime" of associating with a white girl.

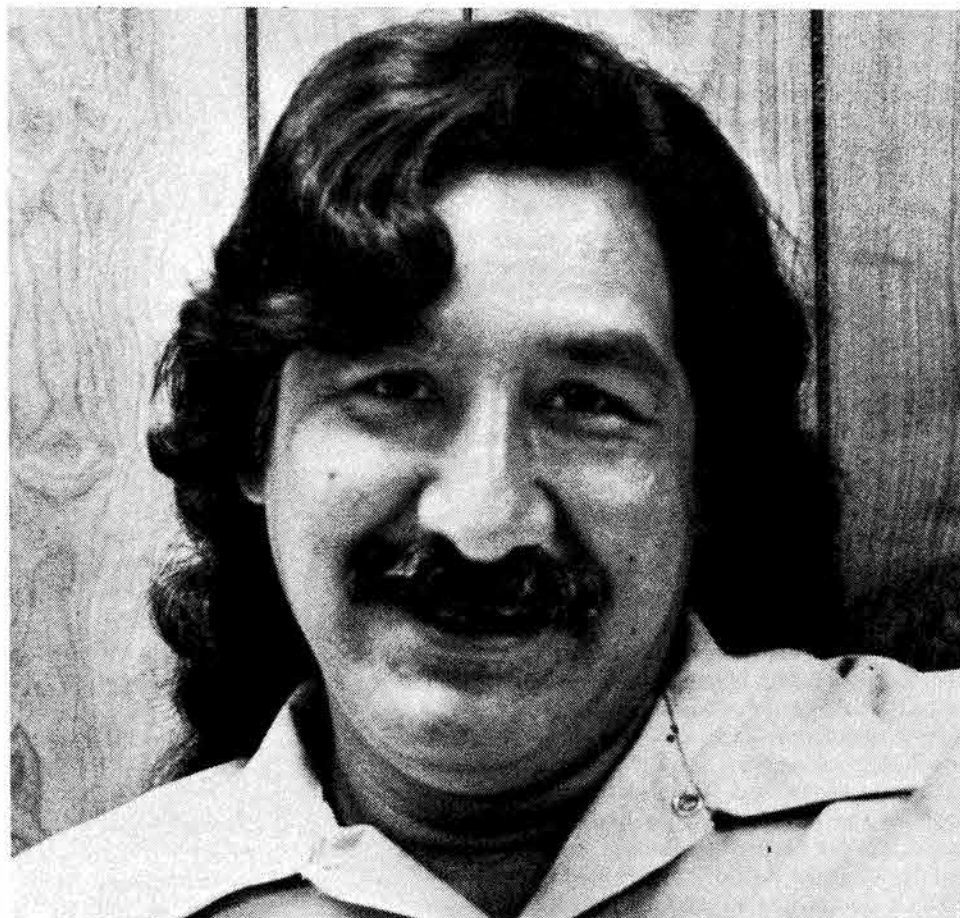
In the early 1960s, Peltier explained, "I was 17 years old, I had no job, I was hungry. So I joined the U.S. Marine Corps.

"Of course, I was just coming out of high school, indoctrinated like everybody else — I still had some patriotism in me. And I enjoyed the physical training.

Racism in the marines

"But it was the racism in the military that opened my eyes," he continued. "It dawned on me one day during training.

"We were going to go kill every gook, go shoot and bomb every communist — I



Militant/Steve Marshall

Leonard Peltier

thought, wait a minute, that's just what they've been doing to my people.

"I was being a hypocrite, going to fight for a country I didn't support. I proceeded to end my military career."

After leaving the marines, Peltier moved around and worked various jobs, helping to sign up coworkers into carpenters' and laborers' unions.

In Seattle he was a leader of the Native American occupation of the army's Fort Lawton, which the U.S. government was forced to accept as legal. He also helped organize Indian participation in a 1968 march against the Vietnam War.

American Indian Movement

That year Dennis Banks, Russell Means, and John Trudell founded the American Indian Movement. AIM led actions in defense of Indian rights, such as the occupation of Alcatraz Island in 1970 to demand land.

AIM also joined in protests against racism and the Vietnam War. Among the growing number of Native Americans attracted to its ranks was Leonard Peltier, who was a leader of AIM's week-long occupation of Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) offices in Washington.

One center of Native American activism

was Pine Ridge, one of the largest reservations in the country. In 1972 local residents formed the Oglala Sioux Civil Rights Organizations and attempted to replace the BIA-run tribal government with one controlled by the Indians themselves. They invited AIM to join them.

This Indian militancy drew fire from the U.S. government. The FBI targeted AIM with its Cointelpro-type operations — the illegal "counterintelligence program" to stifle opposition to government policies.

"We were growing too strong," recalls Peltier. "We had too much rhythm. AIM was popular among Indian people, and the government wanted to crush it."

In 1972 FBI agents began pouring into western South Dakota, to build what the agent in charge called "a colonial police force" for the Pine Ridge reservation.

FBI and BIA agents subjected Indian activities to surveillance, infiltration, arrests, and violence. They armed and organized collaborators in the tribal government and set up a terrorist outfit called Guardians of the Oglala Nation, or GOON — "our contras" Peltier called them.

Wounded Knee

In February 1973, some 300 AIM supporters were camped along Wounded Knee Creek. (Wounded Knee is officially designated a battlefield. The "battle" occurred in 1890, when U.S. army officers massacred hundreds of unarmed Indians.)

FBI agents, Green Berets, and regular army troops surrounded the camp with armored personnel carriers, helicopters, jet fighters, and explosives. They occupied Pine Ridge in a two-month military siege.

Sympathy for AIM among the U.S. population forced the government to a settlement and prevented a bloodbath — initially. But there followed a reign of terror on the reservation.

Hundreds of Indians were assaulted by cops and GOON thugs. Between 1972 and 1976 Pine Ridge suffered the highest violent death rate in the United States — eight times that of Detroit. More than 70 AIM supporters were murdered.

By then western South Dakota had the highest ratio in the country of FBI agents to residents — but not one of these political killings was solved. Instead, hundreds of AIM supporters were framed up and thrown into prison.

FBI provocation at Jumping Bull

In 1975, at the invitation of tribal elders, Leonard Peltier and some 30 other AIM members set up a camp at Jumping Bull ranch on Pine Ridge.

On June 26 two FBI agents drove onto Jumping Bull — investigating, they said, the theft of a pair of cowboy boots. When

the FBI agents opened fire, the Indians defended themselves.

An army of 200 combat-ready cops was in place and waiting. They fell upon the camp with guns blazing. When the firefight ended the two FBI agents and one Indian were dead; the other AIM members escaped.

Two events took place in Washington on the day of the Jumping Bull shootout. Richard Wilson, the BIA-sponsored Pine Ridge tribal president, illegally sold off mineral rights to 70,000 uranium-rich acres, one-eighth of the reservation. And the U.S. Senate's Church Committee abruptly canceled its investigation into FBI abuses against American Indians.

The FBI provocation at Jumping Bull, say AIM supporters, served as a diversion from the mineral-rights sale and a convenient excuse for canceling the inquiry.

Four Indians were charged with murder. Peltier was arrested in Canada and extradited. Dino Butler and Bob Robideau were acquitted by an Iowa jury on grounds of self-defense.

Then charges against Jimmy Eagle were dropped so that, in the words of an FBI memo, "the full prosecutive weight of the federal government could be directed against Leonard Peltier."

Frame-up in federal court

Peltier's 1977 trial in Fargo, North Dakota, featured:

- a judge notorious for anti-Indian racism;
- a ban on the very evidence by which Peltier's codefendants had been acquitted;
- a ban on evidence of FBI misconduct;
- FBI perjury, including sworn testimony that Peltier's rifle had fired one of the fatal shots. The FBI "firearms expert" who testified to this had just told his superiors that Peltier's rifle could not possibly have fired it.

Peltier was convicted, sentenced to two terms of life imprisonment, and taken to the U.S. Penitentiary at Marion, Illinois.

Appeals since the trial have shredded the frame-up. *The government has admitted falsifying the extradition affidavit and firearms testimony.* In a 1985 hearing the government conceded it "has no idea" who actually shot the two FBI agents.

The FBI acknowledges it has some 6,000 secret files on the Peltier case.

But a federal appeals court, although it recognized clear government misconduct and the possibility that a fair trial might have acquitted Peltier, decided to leave him in prison. The U.S. Supreme Court agreed.

"The 7th Cavalry got Crazy Horse," Peltier said, and the Eighth Circuit [Court of Appeals] got me."

Marion and Leavenworth

Peltier has spent most of his imprisonment at Marion, the maximum-security unit of the federal prison system.

He confirmed recently published reports of brutality and degradation there. Beatings are routine; outside their cells prisoners are constantly shackled, handcuffed, and forced to march and stand at attention. Peltier, like many others, was repeatedly held in lengthy solitary confinement.

On one occasion, for offering food to a neighbor, he was attacked in his cell by six club-swinging guards.

Public attention on his case finally forced the government to transfer him to Leavenworth. "It's no picnic," he assured, "but it's better than Marion."

Peltier has lost most of the sight in his left eye, the result, doctors believe, of a minor stroke he suffered when his second appeal was rejected. Earlier this year a team of Soviet eye specialists examined him.

He works as an orderly, for \$20 a week, in the crafts area of the prison. Working isn't mandatory, but "if you don't you go to Marion."

He became eligible last fall for parole; he and his lawyers William Kunstler and Bruce Ellison, are discussing possible approaches to a parole hearing.

Peltier reads and corresponds widely, works with his attorneys, directs the work of the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee,

Continued on Page 13

Trial opens in Jerusalem for jailed Israeli editors

JERUSALEM, Israel — The trial of four editors of *Derech Hanitzotz* (Way of the Spark) opened here September 8.

At the trial, a fifth member of the editorial board who had been arrested and released, was taken back into custody.

The defendants are charged with being members of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, an affiliate of the Palestine Liberation Organization, which is outlawed by the Israeli regime.

Published in Hebrew and Arabic, *Derech Hanitzotz* opposes the Israeli oppression of the Palestinian people.

The four defendants are Yaacov Ben-Efrat, Ronnie Ben-Efrat, Michal Schwartz, and Assaf Adiv.

Taken back into custody was Hadas Lahav. She will be held until the next court session, September 14, and will then be called on to testify for the prosecution.

When she was released last May, Lahav was told she was considered a prosecution witness. She declared at the time that she would not testify against the other staff members.

In court, the three-judge panel accepted a defense request that Lahav's leg shackles

be removed. But the judges rejected a plea that she not be jailed because she is taking care of the children of Ronnie and Yaacov Ben-Efrat.

The four defendants have been held without bail since last April and May.

Initial prosecution witnesses included two policemen who participated — along with the Shin Bet, Israel's secret police — in the arrest of Yaacov Ben-Efrat.

The policemen gave contradictory testimony regarding the search and evidence found when Ben-Efrat was arrested. They could not confirm that the evidence presented in court — letters, leaflets, notes — were those confiscated at the time of the arrest.

It was learned in court that the evidence is to lay the basis for an additional charge against Yaacov Ben-Efrat.

The charge is "possession of propaganda material of a forbidden organization." The evidence consists of three small leaflets, two of which were issued by trade unions in the West Bank and the third by a youth association.

If convicted, the defendants face 40 years in jail.

UN plan on W. Sahara tentatively accepted by Polisario Front

BY SAM MANUEL

The government of Morocco and the People's Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Río de Oro (Polisario Front) have accepted a United Nations proposal aimed at ending the 13-year-old war in the former Spanish colony of Western Sahara. Western Sahara is located on the northwest coast of Africa and borders Morocco, Algeria, and Mauritania.

The details of the plan remain to be negotiated. Its immediate aim is to establish a cease-fire, but no date has been agreed to yet. Following the cease-fire the UN would deploy a force of 2,000 soldiers under its jurisdiction to Western Sahara. Morocco would be required to withdraw two-thirds of its 150,000 occupation troops from the country.

Finally the UN would name a special representative who would administer the country and organize a referendum among the estimated 370,000 Saharans on whether to become independent or remain a part of Morocco. Only those born in Western Sahara before the last Spanish census in 1974 will be allowed to vote. Eligibility will be determined by a UN commission. During the referendum Moroccan and Polisario troops would be confined to their bases under supervision of the UN.

Polisario accepts conditionally

Polisario Front spokesperson Bechir Moustapha said his organization has accepted the plan "with certain conditions." Polisario is concerned about "the future of the Moroccan administration and army," Moustapha said. He also said that details of the Moroccan withdrawal from Western Sahara would have to be worked out in negotiations. In the past Polisario has insisted that all Moroccan troops and administrators who do not have the right to vote be removed from the country.

According to press reports UN officials are pushing for a compromise in the referendum that would also allow a vote for a loose federation with Morocco.

The UN proposal comes in the wake of the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Algeria and Morocco in May of this year. Algeria has long supported independence for Western Sahara and has provided military bases and weapons for Polisario. Algeria was one of the first countries to recognize Polisario's declaration of Western Sahara as the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) in 1976.

That same year Polisario was also admitted to the Organization of African Unity

(OAU) as a full member. Morocco responded by breaking relations with Algeria and walking out of the OAU. Seventy-one countries, mainly in Africa, recognize Polisario and the SADR.

Spanish colonization

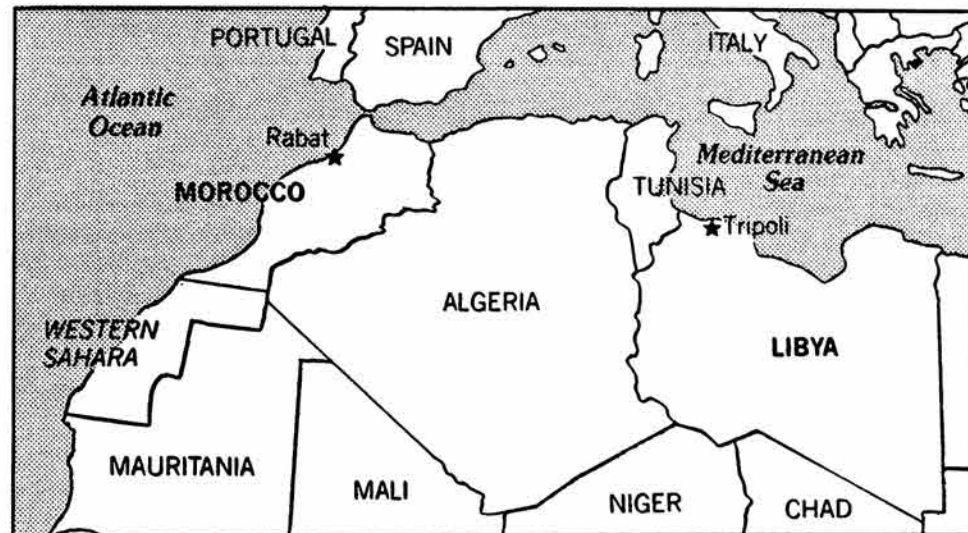
Spanish colonization of Western Sahara began in the late 1800s, but the Spanish occupiers did not venture from their coastal fortresses until 1934. Polisario was founded in 1973 and began the struggle against Spanish colonization.

In 1964 the UN General Assembly had passed the first of a decade of resolutions calling on Spain to allow self-determination to the Saharans.

In mid-1974 Spain took advantage of objections by Morocco and Mauritania to forestall holding a referendum on independence for the territory. Morocco and Mauritania also laid claim to Western Sahara and suggested instead that a fact-finding commission be sent to the area and that an opinion be obtained from the International Court of Justice.

Moroccan annexation

On Oct. 16, 1975, the court unanimously decided that neither Morocco nor Mau-



ritania had demonstrated past sovereignty over Western Sahara and that self-determination should be granted to the Saharans. The next day Morocco began the annexation of Western Sahara. Projected as a non-violent "green" or "peace" march, 350,000 Moroccan supporters of King Hassan II descended on the coastal towns, backed by the Royal Armed Forces that occupied the inland frontier.

On Nov. 14, 1975, Spain, Morocco, and Mauritania announced they had reached an agreement to partition Western Sahara between Morocco and Mauritania. Polisario continued its fight against its new occupiers.

After three years of war Mauritania renounced its claim and withdrew from Western Sahara in August 1979. The Moroccan government immediately moved

to occupy the southern half of the country.

Morocco claims to control two-thirds of the country, including all towns, its vast phosphate mines, and the entire Atlantic coastline. In April 1987 Morocco completed a 900-mile, six-foot-high wall of sand and rock embedded with electronic sensors to warn of attack.

But Polisario clearly has the allegiance of the population, with nearly all Saharans living either in the zones controlled by Polisario or in camps in Algeria. Phosphate mining, central to the country's economy and a major target of Polisario attacks, has been substantially disrupted. Production at the multinational Bu Craa mine was reduced from 2.7 million tons in 1975 to 270,000 in 1976. Production was halted in 1977. The war has cost Morocco an estimated \$100 million a year.

Protest messages from around world

Continued from Page 8

tance Fund; **Carroll Nearmyer**, president American Agriculture Movement, Inc., Iowa; **Milan Wisniewski**, president, American Agriculture Movement, Inc., Minnesota; **Dolores Swoboda**, farmer, Redwood Falls, Minnesota; **John Kinsman**, co-chairperson, Wisconsin Family Farm Defense Committee; **Wayne Easter**, president, National Farmers Union of Canada; **Marvin Porter**, farmer sentenced to year in prison for fighting foreclosure; **Don and Dolores Easdale**, farmers, Kirksville, Missouri; **Douglas Harsh**, president, Wisconsin Farm Unity Alliance.

Mark Curtis needs defending because this world needs more young people like Mark, regardless of their political affiliation, to speak out against the injustice that creates poverty, war, and the destruction of the environment.

From what I know of this case, including witnessing a day of prosecution testimony, it is my opinion that the charges strain be-

lievability and should be dismissed.

George Naylor, family farmer, Iowa.

I have been made aware of the horrible treatment that has been inflicted on Mr. Mark Curtis. In the name of the U.S. Bill of Rights, I demand that the police who brutally beat Mr. Curtis be tried and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Yves Antoine Richard, general secretary, Independent Federation of Haitian Workers (CATH).

We have been informed of the arrest, beating, and laying of charges against Mark Curtis, member of United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 431 in Des Moines, Iowa, on March 4 this year.

The circumstances surrounding this case, in particular the illegal FBI spying against Mr. Curtis, the racist taunts of the police officers involved in the interrogation, and the brutal physical beating of Mr. Curtis while in custody, raise serious doubts about the validity of charges against him.

As elected officials of one of the two unions of meat-packers in New Zealand, the Auckland & Tamoana Freezing Workers Union, we would like to express our support for the call to drop all the charges against Mark Curtis.

G.T. Cooke, district secretary, and **F.E. Barnard**, district president, Auckland & Tamoana Freezing Workers, Auckland, New Zealand.

I have been informed about the beating and arrest of Mark Curtis and also the charges against him. As a representative of a union with a lot of immigrant workers that also has taken a position in solidarity with the peoples in Central America, I want to stress that we have a strong feeling of solidarity with Mark Curtis. We therefore protest the beating of Mark Curtis and the absurd accusations against him.

Mats Hollander, president, Kommunal (public workers union) Local 3, Branch 5, Stockholm, Sweden.

We offer our support to the campaign for justice for Mark Curtis. His harassment by the racist Des Moines police concerns everyone who shares his commitment to the rights of blacks, women and workers.

The justice system in France, as in the United States, is designed to support the interests of the ruling class. In New Caledonia seven people who admitted the premeditated ambush and assassination of 10 unarmed Kanaks were freed because the court accepted their claim that they were acting in legitimate self-defense. Meanwhile, more than 130 Kanak political prisoners are held in French jails.

We are currently organizing international support for around 30 Kanak prisoners held in France on charges of murder and armed rebellion relating to the events on Ouvea, New Caledonia, earlier this year.

We join the call for the charges in the frame-up against Curtis to be dropped. It is the police who assaulted him who should be prosecuted.

Susanna Ounei-Small, representative in New Zealand of the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS), **David Small**.

It appears from the information available that Mr. Mark Curtis is being charged falsely in efforts to deter his union and solidarity activities. As a longtime union officer and activist, I am very familiar with the reprehensible tactics used by employers, prosecutors, and police to repress those individuals and organizations who advocate workers' rights, in our country and abroad.

After reviewing the photo taken of Mr. Mark Curtis following his release from custody, it is clear that individuals in the Des Moines police department decided that they were also judge and jury. When we see that kind of activity by the police and military in other countries, we rightly condemn it as totalitarian.

Further, I urge that strenuous efforts be made to cleanse the police department of any influence of racists, like the KKK, as has been reported in the *Des Moines Register*.

Mark Stepp, vice-president, United Auto Workers International Union.

The Oregon AFL-CIO wishes to register its strong protest against the arrest and beating of Mark Curtis at the hands of the Des Moines police in March of this year. The facts of this case indicate he is being victimized for his political beliefs and union activities, especially for his efforts in support of immigrant workers in the meat-packing plant where he works.

Irv Fletcher, president, Oregon AFL-CIO.

Socialist Workers 1988 Campaign

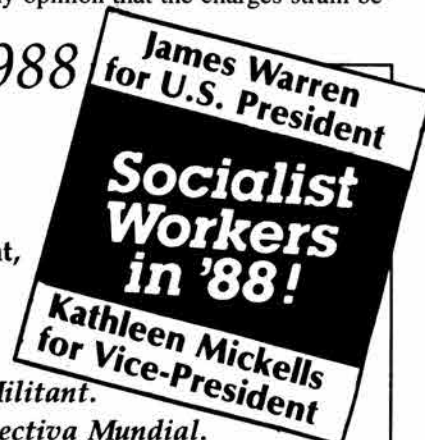
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Quick, la migra! — Foraging for food, young black bears from Pennsylvania and New Jersey have been making it across the border into New York State. "They



Harry Ring

are the juvenile delinquents of the bear population," warned one expert. Another added, "The bears don't recognize any state line. They wander back and forth."

Sounds subversive — In Lub-

bock, Texas, blind workers are on strike at the Lighthouse, a social agency. The workers make straps and pads for military helmets and get \$2.05 an hour. They want the \$3.35 minimum wage paid their sighted coworkers, and paid insurance. They struck when the Lighthouse said they would have to pay \$65 a month for health insurance.

Land of the free — Workers at the construction site of the Dallas symphony center were compelled to kneel before drug-sniffing dogs. They were told to sign consent waivers or be fired. An official said the drug hunt was done with "the utmost respect for human dignity." A worker responded, "It's degrading to have to get down on your knees to keep your job."

Balanced view — "Very often people want their dirty work done, but don't want to do it themselves. I'm not sure it's wrong. . . . It's clearly not heroic character, but that does not mean it's immoral." — Catholic moral theologian Germain Grisez, pondering Senator Quayle's use of family influence to avoid Vietnam duty.

Just making a buck — In Miami, the Cordis company pleaded guilty to deliberately selling thousands of defective pacemakers. Implanted in heart patients, the devices regulate the heartbeat. The defective ones stop working without warning.

Science, the American Way — a Philadelphia MD pleaded no

contest to selling stolen body parts to research labs. The operation was uncovered when UPS workers noticed something leaking from foul-smelling containers and found several human heads. The doc's lawyer said his client believed he was "enhancing medical science."

Sounds plausible — "... a fast-paced story of business, politics, crime, and how the three easily become one." — A *Newsday* plug for *Metal Men: Marc Rich and the \$10 Billion Scam*.

Need a break? — A small luxury hotel in Britain's Lake District can be reserved for a 24-hour bash for a party of 60. Air transportation from London, Rolls Royce taxi service, 150-foot buffet table,

lots of bubbly. £25,000 (U.S. \$42,000). And, if you don't relate to crowds, there's the Getaway Weekend for two. £4,000.

All in a day's work — DAL-LAS (AP) — An automobile repossessor was shot to death when he and another man were mistaken for prowlers, police said.

The way the cookie crumbles — "Before year-end, Wall Street will have cut as many as 5,000 more jobs, analysts predict, as last October's stock market collapse continues to be felt throughout the financial markets. Brokerage firms have already reduced their payrolls by 15,000 since the market peaked a year ago." — September 5 *New York Times*.

—CALENDAR—

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Breaking the Information Blockade: An Evening in Solidarity With Nicaragua. Speakers: Alexander Cockburn, journalist and *Nation* columnist; Arturo Zamora, director of international relations for daily *Barricada*; Ruth Warner, English-language editor of *Barricada Internacional*. Fri., Sept. 23, 7:30 p.m. First Congregation Church, Post and Mason streets. Donation: \$5. Sponsor: Friends of Barricada Internacional. For more information call (415) 654-0104.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Veterans Peace Convoy: The Journey from Maine to Managua. Speaker: Bob Livesey, national coordinator of the convoy. Sun., Sept. 18, 7 p.m. 605 Massachusetts Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (617) 247-6772.

MINNESOTA

Austin

The Decline of the U.S. Empire and the Road Forward for Working People. Speaker: Kathleen Mickells, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. vice-president. Sat., Sept. 17. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. 407½ N. Main St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Socialist Workers Campaign. For more information call (507) 433-3461.

St. Paul

The Decline of the U.S. Empire and the Road Forward for Working People. Speaker: Kathleen Mickells, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. vice-president. Sun., Sept. 18, 4 p.m. Dinner to follow. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$4. Sponsor: Militant Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

St. Paul Fire Fighters and Affirmative Action. Speakers: Natasha Terlexis, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress, member International Association of Machinists; others. Sat., Sept. 24, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

The Right and Its Campaign Against Cuba.

Speakers: Andrés Gómez, editor of *Areito*; others. A forum conducted in Spanish. Fri., Sept. 16, 8 p.m. Casa de las Américas, 104 W 14 St. Donation: \$1. Sponsors: Casa de las Américas, *Areito*, and Antonio Maceo Brigade.

Freedom for the Hartford 15. Speakers: Elías Castro Ramos, defendant in Hartford 15 case; Carlos Feliciano, former political prisoner, Puerto Rican nationalist leader; Jaime Veve, representative of Puerto Rican Committee Against Repression, member Transportation Workers Union; Selva Nebbia, editor *Perspectiva Mundial*. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Sept. 17, 7:30 p.m. 79 Leonard St. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

Turning Point in the Liberation Struggle in Southern Africa. Showing of Cuban TV documentary on the battle of Cuito Cuanavale in southern Angola, where Cuban, Angolan, and Namibian troops defeated the South African army. Translation to English and French. Sun., Sept. 18, 6 p.m. 79 Leonard St. Donation: \$5. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

Young Women and the Struggle for Abortion Rights. Sun., Sept. 18, 7 p.m. 2219 E Market. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (919) 272-5996.

The Legacy of Malcolm X. Sun., Sept. 25, 7 p.m. 2219 E Market. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (919) 272-5996.

OREGON

Portland

Nicaragua Today: Report From Recent Visitors. Speakers: Meredith Boatman, just returned from high school students' tour of Nicaragua; John Linder, visited Nicaragua on first anniversary of brother Ben Linder's death; Tim Calvert, Portland-Corinto Sister City Association; Sher Davidson, participant in Ben Linder Construction Brigade. Sat., Sept. 17, 7:30 p.m. 2732 NE Union. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Forum. For more information call (503) 287-7416.

Report From Trial of Mark Curtis. Speaker: Brian Williams, member of Mark Curtis De-

fense Committee. Sat., Sept. 24, 7:30 p.m. 2732 NE Union. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Forum. For more information call (503) 287-7416.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

Justice for Mark Curtis! Speaker: Holly Harkness, spent three weeks in Des Moines, Iowa, working with the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. Sat., Sept. 17, 7:30 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave., Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (412) 362-6767.

TEXAS

Houston

Homelessness and the Housing Crisis. Speakers to be announced. Sat., Sept. 24, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

UTAH

Salt Lake City

The Peace Accords in Southern Africa. Speakers: Andrew Hunt, managing editor *Utah daily Chronicle*; representative of Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Sept. 24, 7:30 p.m. 147 E 900 S. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Homeless and the Housing Crisis. Speakers: Susie Sinclair-Smith, director, Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless; Sherri Conway, leader of Working Campers at Burke Lake Park, Fairfax County, Virginia; Pat Silverthorn, Young Socialist Alliance, member Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 2331. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Sept. 17, 7:30 p.m. 3165 Mt. Pleasant NW. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (202) 797-7699.

The Criminal Justice System and Workers' Rights. Speaker: Susan Zárate, Socialist Workers Party, member United Steelworkers of America Local 14287. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Sept. 24, 7:30 p.m. 3165 Mt. Pleasant NW. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (202) 797-7699.

Activists' Conference Against Apartheid Sept. 23-25 Yale University New Haven, Conn.

The Free South Africa Coalition of Greater New Haven is hosting a conference for common strategies against apartheid and for a democratic South Africa. The Freedom Charter will be unifying theme of event.

Fri., Sept. 23, 8 p.m. Let Us Speak Together, featuring Albertina Sisulu, co-chair of United Democratic Front (by telephone hookup); Pallo Jordan, African National Congress; New Haven Mayor Biagio DiLieto. Battell Chapel.

Sat., Sept. 24, Let Us Organize Together. Registration starts at 8 a.m.

Sun., Sept. 25, Let Us Go Forward Together. Starts 8:30 a.m.

For more information contact New Haven Free South Africa Coalition, 267 Chapel St., New Haven, Conn. 06513. Telephone (203) 777-2756.

WEST VIRGINIA

Charleston

Victory in Southern Africa. Speaker: Andrew Pulley, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Sept. 17, 7 p.m. 116 McFarland St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 345-3040.

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee

Korea: the Truth Behind the Olympic Hype. Class: "Hidden History of the Korean War." Speaker: Will Reissner, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Sept. 24, 4 p.m. Forum: "Korea: Dictatorship, Upsurge, and the Fight for Reunification." Speaker: Will Reissner. Sat., Sept. 24, 7:30 p.m. 4707 W Lisbon Ave. Donation: \$2 per event. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (414) 445-2076.

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Wellington: 23 Majoribanks St., Courtenay Pl. Postal address: P.O. Box 9092. (4) Tel: 844-205.

SWEDEN

Stockholm: P.O. Box 5024, S-12505 Älvsjö. Tel: (08) 722-9342.

Interview with jailed Indian rights activist

Continued from Page 10

headquartered in nearby Kansas City. He receives most mail that's sent to him; the wardens are required to notify him of any material they withhold.

"We're going to beat them"

Peltier spoke with confidence about the direction of world politics. His conversation returned several times to the Middle East and southern Africa.

"We can identify with the Palestinians, with the South Africans," he said, "because the same thing happened to us — colonization.

"We identify with all these struggles — Ireland, Nicaragua, El Salvador.

"We're going to beat them," he said with a smile. "The international struggle is advancing. The Palestinians, the South Africans aren't going to give up, and now a new generation is taking to the streets."

Peltier is a supporter of the Nicaraguan revolution. "I'm certain that, if left alone, Nicaragua will become very successful," he said. "They're wiping out illiteracy, providing medical care.

"Reagan tried to crush the revolution, but too many people support it," he continued. "We still need a bigger movement against the moves to destroy the revolution."

Sandinistas 'brothers and sisters'

Peltier thinks the Sandinista government is dealing honestly with the indigenous peoples of Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast.

"The Sandinistas admit their initial mistakes, they've corrected some, they're attempting to correct them all.

"Remember, some of the Miskito Indians were kidnapped by the contras and some were even fighting alongside the contras. Now when the contras threaten to come in, the Miskitos say 'Come on with it. We're armed, we're ready for you.'"

He termed the Cuban revolution "very successful. They're making great medical advances, they wiped out illiteracy, everyone is working, no one is hungry."

Peltier described himself as "a nationalist with socialist leanings. The most important thing to me is the liberation of my people."

Among those he admires he listed Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, Geronimo, Cochise, Ernesto Che Guevara, Nelson Mandela, Daniel Ortega, and Fidel Castro.

"I have great respect for our chiefs on the reservations," he continued, "and for [AIM leader] Dennis Banks."

Peltier termed the inclusion of his portrait in the Pathfinder mural on the six-story Pathfinder Building in New York "quite an honor. It left me speechless.

"Art is very political, always has been. It's a great weapon, a great tool of every struggle." He produced a number of paintings while in prison, the sale of which helps fund his defense effort.

'Get involved in the struggle'

Peltier advises young people to "get involved in the struggle. You can read about civil rights, about Vietnam, about Indian history, but you can't develop that education about what took place until you get involved yourself."

British gov't ousts Cuban envoy

Continued from front page

"vendetta" against the Cuban embassy.

Speaking on the day following the expulsion order to a rally of 300 in Leicester in England's East Midlands region, Labour Party Member of Parliament Tony Benn said, "When we look at the headlines and see how the press presents the SAS [Special Air Services] shootings in Gibraltar, and compare it with how a militant Cuban defends himself from what may have been a kidnap attempt, it is double standards. It was unfair to expel the ambassador, who was not directly involved at all. It's a very serious thing.

"It looks like Mrs. Thatcher and the Tories [Conservative Party] are looking for another 'foreign enemy.' Now she's getting on better with Gorbachev, maybe she's decided that Castro is the main enemy we're all now supposed to fear and hate."

Demands are growing that the govern-

He presents his case in that light: "If you want to go out there and be a political activist, to correct the wrongs of this government — your freedom, your lives are in jeopardy, too. If you don't help win freedom for Peltier, you may as well just lie down, put your head under your wings, and forget it.

"They're not just attacking Peltier, but all Indian people, all citizens of this country," he said. "They destroyed the Constitution to convict me.

"Won't win freedom in courts"

"It will take a major campaign, but we're going to win. My freedom won't be won in the courts — it will be won by the

Burma protests demand gov't step down

Continued from front page

government's moves and called for its replacement. Two, Aung Gyi and Tin Oo, were once high officials of the military regime. The third is Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, daughter of Aung San, a leader of Burma's struggle for independence from Britain.

In an emergency meeting September 11 the party-controlled parliament called for the election to be held within six weeks to three months, but authorized the Council of State — the highest government body — to postpone it if needed. The parliament established a body of five BSPP members who are government officials to oversee the elections.

But Maung Maung ignored calls that the government step down and allow establishment of an interim government.

Instead, he threatened to use force against students, Buddhist monks, and others who have taken over the administration of many areas in the course of the uprising. "It is essential to remove them immediately," he declared. "People are now fed up with this lawlessness."

In the preceding days, the regime attempted to reassert a degree of control allegedly to control widespread looting of rice and other goods held in government warehouses. Troops were moved into the streets for the first time since August 24. Five alleged looters were shot dead in Rangoon, and 17 were wounded in a suburb.

In the wake of Maung Maung's threats, people reportedly poured into the streets, shouting, "Maung Maung out! Maung Maung out!"

The government's latest concessions to the continuing popular upsurge come as a number of officers, soldiers, and military units voiced public opposition to the government.

On September 9, 200 uniformed air force personnel publicly defected to the antigovernment forces by taking refuge at Rangoon University, a main base of the student organizations that have spearheaded the movement. A number of naval personnel and soldiers joined factory workers, students, Buddhist monks and others in the mass demonstrations on September 7 and 8. The demonstrations coincided with a general strike. About 1,000 uniformed police officers joined a September 10 mass march.

ment explain the role of MI5 in the incident, including its collaboration with the CIA.

The Cuban foreign ministry statement asks several questions:

"How did Señor Florentino Azpillaga Lombard get to London? What sort of passport was he carrying? What name appeared on his identity documents. What did the British authorities know of all this?"

Fernández Mell was a founding member of Cuba's Communist Party and was elected to its first Central Committee. He fought in the Sierra Maestra during the struggle against the Batista dictatorship in the 1950s, and later joined Che Guevara in an internationalist mission to aid anti-imperialist rebels in the Congo (now Zaire) in central Africa.

Prior to being appointed ambassador to Britain in April 1987, he had been mayor of Havana.

people. I'll continue filing motions and appeals, but what's needed is more international pressure."

Supporters of Peltier's defense include 55 members of Congress, Amnesty International, religious leaders, politicians, and some 18 million Soviet citizens who have signed petitions.

He urged his supporters to pressure elected officials to take a stand. "Work with the defense committee, or organize one. Get the truth out — distribute literature, set up interviews in the media."

And, he says, "We need money. We're using pennies to fight the wealthiest government in the world. We need more money to fight this monster."

Earlier in the week 10 of the army's more than 100 battalions pledged their support to the struggle to bring down Maung Maung.

Former Prime Minister U Nu announced September 9 that he was forming a provisional government headed by himself to replace the Maung Maung regime. U Nu headed the government for most of the years since 1948, when Burma won its independence, until he was ousted by the 1962 military coup carried out by Ne Win.

Three people declined positions in his cabinet when U Nu's declaration received little initial support from other prominent opposition politicians, student leaders, and other opponents of the regime.

The BSPP has served as a political front and patronage machine for the military dictatorship that was established under Ne Win in 1962.

Ne Win stepped down as head of the party in July, after waves of student-led protests in March and June. Many in Burma believe he is still deciding government policy from behind the scenes. He has not appeared in public since resigning.

In the United States, some differences have appeared between the Reagan administration and Democratic leaders in Congress over how to respond to the uprising.

The U.S. government's ties with the Ne Win dictatorship have grown closer in recent years. In 1979, Ne Win pulled Burma

AIM leader John Trudell calls him "the Crazy Horse of his generation," but Peltier speaks of his accomplishments in modest terms.

"I didn't choose federal prison," he says, "but you fight where you have to. I'm fortunate people have stuck by me.

"I'm nothing special, just a warrior like everybody else. If they singled me out, they singled out a lot of others too."

The Leonard Peltier Defense Committee can be reached at P.O. Box 10044, 1805 W. 39th St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111. Telephone (816) 531-5774. Tax deductible contributions should be made out to The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine and mailed to the defense committee.

out of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries. Recently, his regime has received some U.S. military assistance for operations in the countryside against guerrilla bands led by the Communist Party or based on minority nationalities. The aid was given on the pretext of waging a war on opium cultivation.

U.S. officials have taken their distance from the government, as its authority has crumbled, but have not identified themselves with the opposition.

Leading Democrats adopted a different tone toward the events. "The government there has completely unravelled," declared Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-N.Y.), chairman of the Asia subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, after a visit to Burma over the September 3-4 weekend.

"It is very much in the interest of the United States to make it as clear as possible, as quickly as possible, that we are strongly on the side of democracy rather than dictatorship in Burma."

On September 7, the House of Representatives adopted a resolution praising the protesters in Burma and calling for the establishment of a "transitional body" to organize the holding of "multiparty elections." Introducing a similar measure in the Senate, New York Senator Daniel Moynihan complained that the Reagan administration "did not welcome my initiative, did not welcome it at all."

— 10 AND 25 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWS WEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
Sept. 22, 1978

As immense nationwide demonstrations threatened to bring down his regime, the shah of Iran put his most reliable troops into action to massacre protesters in the capital city of Tehran September 8. The demonstrators had poured into the streets in violation of a last-minute martial-law decree.

The shah has recently stepped up repression hoping to stop the most massive explosion of antigovernment demonstrations in Iranian history. Shouts of "Down with the shah!" have filled the streets of cities and villages throughout Iran for more than a month, reaching a crescendo the first week of September.

In response, martial law has been declared for six months. A curfew from dusk to dawn has been ordered and gatherings of more than two persons declared illegal.

Immediately after martial law was imposed September 8, special squads were sent to arrest demonstration activists, as well as prominent leaders associated with opposition political parties and civil liberties organizations. Altogether, the military has launched a dragnet for an estimated 4,000 people.

Although the official government toll for the shootings is given at 95 killed, eyewitnesses reached by telephone September 12 report that nearly 4,000 death certificates have been issued in Tehran alone since the shah's new crackdown began.

On September 4, a demonstration estimated at 400,000 to 1 million people wound through Tehran, a city of nearly 5 million people. This was the largest in a day of demonstrations involving 3 to 4 million people in nearly every city.

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Negroes in Birmingham have armed themselves and are patrolling their neighborhoods. On "Dynamite Hill," so-called because of the frequency of "unsolved racist bombings there, Negro residents have set up their own armed protective system with observation posts and a communications network to guard against bombers.

A mass meeting held at the Sixth Avenue Baptist Church on September 16 was guarded by a volunteer corps of Negroes who regularly checked all parts of the building, inside and out, for explosives such as those which killed four young Negro girls at the 16th Street Baptist Church the previous day.

The self-defense measures taken by Birmingham's Negroes constitute the only protection they have. All the official "law enforcement" bodies, not only offer them no protection, but are their worst enemies and a constant threat to their safety.

President Kennedy's playing of politics from the beginning of this month's school desegregation crisis in Alabama is largely responsible for the deaths of the six Negro children. His decision not to send federal marshals or troops to Birmingham was a deliberate gamble with the lives of Negro children in that city.

As early as September 4, Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, militant Birmingham rights leader, warned Kennedy: "The national administration is making a mistake, playing cat and mouse with George Wallace and regarding this as a purely local matter."

Desegregation victory in Yonkers

In the early morning hours of September 10, the Yonkers City Council took one more vote on whether to approve a court-ordered housing desegregation plan for the city. After years of stonewalling, the plan was finally passed, five to two.

Pressure on the city council to comply with the court order had been mounting by the hour in recent weeks.

In early August, Federal Judge Leonard Sand levied crippling fines against the city and four city council members blocking the plan, which called for building 1,000 units of low- and moderate-income housing on Yonkers' predominantly white east side. By September 9, the city's fines amounted to \$1 million per day, and a "doomsday" plan for the lay-off of city workers and cuts in city services was beginning to be implemented.

Yonkers, which spent at least \$29 million fighting the desegregation order, lost its last legal round September 1 when the Supreme Court ruled to deny its appeal.

Pressure was mounting on Gov. Mario Cuomo to take action against the recalcitrant city council members. Removing them from office, said *The New York Times* September 10, "remains a valid, necessary lever to use in pressing the Council to abandon its dishonorable contempt."

A growing number of organizations, including the Yonkers Council of Churches, League of Women Voters, regional AFL-CIO, Yonkers Federation of Teachers, Hispanics for Political Action, American Jewish Congress, and American Civil Liberties Union, called on the city to comply with the housing desegregation plan.

A spokesman for the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department explained in a letter to the *Wall Street Journal* September 9 that "this department has vigorously litigated the [Yonkers] case during the past eight years. . . . I assure you, no matter how long it takes, . . . low- and moderate-income housing, open to all, will be built in east Yonkers."

Behind all this lay the long-standing fight by Yonkers' Black community against segregation in housing and schools, which resulted in the anti-discrimination suit on both questions being filed against the city government in 1980.

When Judge Sand ruled on the case in 1985, he found

the city had intentionally discriminated against Blacks in housing and education for 40 years, and ordered both desegregated. A desegregation plan for the schools began to be implemented in 1986. But members of the city council decided to try to stop the housing order.

The segregationists were finally forced to knuckle under. Why?

While opposition to housing desegregation in Yonkers has exposed the depth of racism that still exists in the United States, the reality is that segregationist forces in the city were increasingly isolated and on the defensive in fighting the court's order.

The pressure to implement desegregation reflects the fact that growing numbers of working people, including many whites, believe that maintaining areas like east Yonkers as "white enclaves" is morally and politically intolerable.

This is one of the achievements of the massive civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s, which destroyed the system of Jim Crow segregation in the Southern states and dealt big blows to de facto segregation in the rest of the country. Efforts to erode the gains of the civil rights movement have not gotten very far — in fact, considerable backing exists for extending those gains.

In early 1987, when the Ku Klux Klan tried to keep Blacks out of Forsyth County, Georgia, there was an immediate, large-scale response by Blacks and whites against the move. The December 1986 lynching of a Black man in Howard Beach, New York, by racists who wanted to keep their neighborhood "for whites only" was met by angry protests and mobilizations, and the eventual conviction of some of those responsible. In Yonkers too, prevailing sentiment has come to weigh against those who think Blacks don't belong on the east side.

The outcome of this case is of national importance — there are thousands of cities and towns like Yonkers across the country where de facto housing segregation exists. A victory here will strengthen efforts to break down segregation elsewhere.

The fight in Yonkers, however, isn't over. City council members are still foot-dragging, trying to negotiate some changes in the housing plan. Continued pressure is needed to insure its speedy implementation.

New provocation against Cuba

The British government's September 13 expulsion of Cuban Ambassador Oscar Fernández Mell and embassy third secretary Carlos Medina Pérez should be roundly condemned.

The pretext for the expulsions was a provocation against Medina Pérez engineered and carried out jointly by British and U.S. intelligence agencies. It is these spy agencies, not the Cuban diplomats, who have violated both the law and norms of diplomatic relations. Their behavior fits the pattern of imperialist efforts to isolate Cuba and deny voice to its representatives around the world.

The groundless accusations against Fernández Mell and Medina Pérez by the government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher should be withdrawn. All records and other information regarding the provocation should be made public by the British government. In particular, all details about British government collaboration with the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency in this incident ought to be brought to light.

Many prominent individuals, including top leaders of the Labour Party, protested the British government's role in this incident. They have opposed using it to disrupt normal diplomatic relations with Cuba.

All supporters of democratic rights and opponents of Washington's decades-long campaign to isolate Cuba should add their voices to these protests. Stop the provocations and rescind the expulsions of Fernández Mell and Medina Pérez.



Militant
Oscar Fernández Mell, Cuban ambassador expelled from Britain.

Get out truth on Curtis frame-up

In this week's issue of the *Militant* we are devoting six of our 16 pages to the frame-up conviction and jailing of Mark Curtis in Des Moines, Iowa, and the kind of defense campaign that must be built to win his freedom.

Because of the importance of this case for the labor movement here and abroad, and for all political activists, we decided to set aside some of our regular features, and postpone coverage of certain other news developments, to allow space for thorough reporting of Curtis' trial and the fight to overturn his conviction.

We urge all our readers to carefully study this coverage. Then we ask a second thing: help us circulate this

issue of the *Militant* far and wide, here in the United States and around the world. Help get out the truth about the frame-up of Curtis and what working people can do to aid his defense.

September 17-24 is a target week in our international circulation campaign to sell more than 10,000 subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* and individual copies of the Marxist magazines *New International* and *Nouvelle Internationale*.

There couldn't be a better time to get the *Militant* into the hands of workers, farmers, and others who will identify with Mark Curtis' battle for justice and become part of the struggle to free him.

Drought breeds more talk of population control

BY DOUG JENNESS

It was to be expected. The drought this summer has inspired those who believe there are too many mouths to feed in the world to beat the drums even louder for reducing population growth.

In a column in the September 8 *Washington Post*, headlined "Bring on the Family Planners," Lester Brown, president of the Worldwatch Institute, argues that the droughts in North America and China this year "will lead

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to the greatest drop ever in world carry-over stocks of grain — the amount in the bin when the new harvest begins — reducing them to an estimated 54 days of consumption." This has brought into sharp relief, he writes, a tightening food situation.

Growth in food output is dropping, Brown argues, because of the limits imposed on farmers by soil and water resources and the lack of new agricultural technologies. He cites a Department of Agriculture report that 25 percent of U.S.-irrigated cropland is drastically lowering the water table.

"If the share of U.S. grain output that was produced with this unsustainable use of soil and water is subtracted from world output," he writes, "the surplus grain stocks of the '80s disappear. If data were available to extend this calculation to the rest of the world, they would very likely show that sustainable world food output is now running below consumption."

In respect to technology, Brown worries that "there are no identifiable technologies waiting in the wings that will lead to the quantum jumps in world food output such as those associated with the spread of hybrid corn," and "the ninefold increase in fertilizer use between 1950 and 1984." Biotechnology, he asserts, won't do the trick.

Brown's conclusion is that improvement in world food production "depends heavily on reversing land degradation and braking population growth."

Ever since an English parson, Thomas Malthus, announced in 1798 that it was a "natural law" for the human population to grow progressively faster than the food supply, doomsayers have been warning that population growth will soon outstrip our food-producing capacity. But they have been refuted at every turn by the advances in science and technology.

Brown isn't very convincing, however, when he claims there are no new technologies "waiting in the wings." How does he know what the limits are to applying new discoveries in genetics and molecular biology to agriculture? Or to developing pesticides and fertilizers that are as effective or more effective than those used today, but without their harmful side effects?

Identifying, in advance, what scientists may turn up to improve labor productivity in agriculture has not always been possible. And the record of the last 200 years on this score would tend to testify against Brown's pronouncement that we have come to the end of the line.

Brown's point that the impressive increases in food production in the last few decades have been accompanied by depletion of soil and water resources has merit. There is no question that in many countries loss of topsoil is occurring at an alarming rate and water is being squandered.

But the fallacy in Brown's argument is that increasing food production *must* go hand in hand with this accelerated depletion of resources. In his view, we are faced with conserving resources so that we can feed fewer people longer or letting the spoliation continue so that we can feed more people in the short run.

Presenting this false trade-off, however, doesn't explain anything about why there is hunger in the world or why destruction of crucial resources continues virtually unrestrained.

This can only be understood by examining the profit-seeking drive of the capitalist ruling families. For them, the purpose of producing and selling food is to realize as hefty a profit as possible, rather than making sure everyone gets adequate nourishment.

If hungry people aren't able to pay for food at a price that will give the food merchants and processors an acceptable rate of profit, the food is stored or destroyed. That's why you can have a world where the food-producing capacity can feed everyone, but according to World Bank figures at least 730 million people suffer from hunger.

Moreover, agribusiness and bankers, in their pursuit of the almighty buck, drive farmers to use methods and chemicals that degrade the soil and water, harm the environment, and create hazards to all producers on the land.

Bringing population growth to a screeching halt as Brown advocates, won't solve the problems of hunger, or environmental destruction. Only working people mobilizing a struggle to overturn the capitalist profiteers and establishing their own rule can begin the process of accomplishing this.

What Pennsylvania coal miners learned from strike

BY KIPP DAWSON

EIGHTY-FOUR, Pa. — On July 8, 1988, the more than 400 members of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Local 1197 returned to work at the BethEnergy mine here feeling strong and united after winning a three-day strike. Our employer, a subsidiary of Bethlehem Steel, had been egging us on for a long time with challenges to our safety, union rights, and dignity. It was health-and-safety issues that finally forced us to walk off the job in our first strike over local issues in more than nine years.

We went back to work after a unanimous vote of the more than 200 members (many others were on vacation)

UNION TALK

at a July 7 meeting. At it union leaders from our local, District 5, and the International reported we'd won everything we'd gone out for. And we had.

But when we returned to work we felt the harsh lash of company retaliation for daring to stand up, united and solid.

We'd struck to stop what the company had announced as an "accident reduction program." The bosses withdrew it. They had told the media that the program "calls for the training of certain individuals who have a 'greater than average' amount of accidents." But the written program submitted to the union on June 14 showed it to be one that, as a union press statement pointed out, "enhances the covering up of accidents" because it is "punitive." In fact the plan was similar to one miners at Rochester and Pittsburgh mines near here defeated through a one-week strike earlier this year. It would have punished miners with "too many" reported accidents with actions including "removal from the job" and "suspension," which means firing.

We'd also struck because more and more of us are having our medical bills ignored or rejected by the company's insurance coverer, finding our doctors refusing to accept our insurance company, and getting harassed by collection agencies for bills our contract specifies are the company's responsibility. Through the strike we got the company to sign a five-point agreement to work with the union to help our members get the coverage we're entitled to.

When the call had gone out for our members not to return to work following the July 4 holiday, the bosses started spreading the line that there was no way our local could stand together and the strike call was doomed to failure. No one was sure how much truth there was to this prediction, as the company has spent years sowing divisions among us.

The company had used the traditional divide-and-rule

weapons of encouraging racism (our local is about 15 percent Black) and antiwoman prejudice (about 15 of us currently working are women). It has also pitted miners against one another on the basis of which of two now-combined mines we originally came from, violating the seniority of a large number of our members. Our members are relatively old (no one has been hired in nine years) and not used to striking or acting as a unit on local issues.

But from the beginning the strike was solid. No pickets were necessary to keep our members out. We got our side of the story told by the local media. Our public information action brought together representatives of all the different groups in the mine — women and men, Black and white, older brothers and the youngest of us, and workers from both of the previous mines. As some brothers and sisters put it we were doing it "like we used to," referring to miners' solidarity-oriented strikes during the 1960s and 1970s.

But we found out when we returned to work that these are not the "old days." We learned that the company had rallied the cops, courts, and their class solidarity against us in a way we had neither anticipated nor prepared for.

As we returned to work, we found ourselves going to the "cage" (the elevator that takes us into the mine) as if we were on a lineup. At midnight the mine superintendent, other company officials, and a stranger eyed each of us up and down, making no effort to conceal the malevolent gleam in their eyes. When our shift came up at 8:00 a.m., we saw the daylight shift getting the same treatment.

The rumor spread quickly: the stranger was the superintendent of a U.S. Steel mine down the road, where workers had honored pickets from our local and not gone to work one shift. As part of "doing it like we used to" a group of our members had gotten together and stood outside the gate to that mine. Their very presence had been enough to turn around a shift. Like the "old days."

But that mine's management had been warned that pickets were coming, had called the cops, and had been waiting for our members. We soon learned that, together, the cops, U.S. Steel, and BethEnergy had identified five pickets and that they were being fired. The five included our local union president and two of the three members of our underground safety committee.

On July 15 each boss in our mine read a five-page letter from the mine superintendent to "his" employees. The letter referred to a 10-year-old ruling by the now-disbanded Arbitration Review Board, which used to be the final authority in disputes between the UMWA and the operators.

In part, the letter said, "The picketing activity of these employees is in clear violation of Arbitration Review Board Decision No. 108. That Arbitration Review Board

decision is still in full force and effect. In that decision, the Board states:

"To begin with, we lump picketing with strike instigation and other strike leadership manifestations as being of the same gravity. They constitute a capital offense — by which we mean an offense which itself warrants discharge and which Management therefore need not treat as an offense calling for application of progressive discipline." In other words, anyone committing this "capital" offense is subject to immediate discharge.

As if that were not enough, this July 15 letter announced disciplinary action against what it called "a large number" of our members who had participated in the informational protest outside company headquarters (away from the mine) on July 6.

The letter of discipline I got, dated July 22, told me that "in the interest of good labor relations and without prejudice to our position, we have decided to only issue you this disciplinary warning letter as an identified member of this group. . . . However, I want to stress to you that any future activity of this nature will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including suspension with intent to discharge."

A couple of weeks after it took these actions, the company offered our fired brothers their jobs back on the condition they give up their offices in the union, sign apology letters, and agree not to run for union office until the current contract expires in 1992, still suspending them from work without pay for 30 days.

On August 29 the five brothers returned to work. Our local has organized a special election to replace the three punished officers.

The disciplinary action against the informational protestors is going through the grievance procedure.

In the meantime, the company has sued our local for hundreds of thousands of dollars for what it claims is income lost because of our strike.

We're still digesting the meaning of all this, talking about it among ourselves, trying to figure out where we stand and how to move forward. On the one hand, no one can take away from us our uniting all the supposedly un-uniteable, and winning what we went out for.

We've seen firsthand that the company is right in assessing that miners have not "yet" given up the "traditional willingness to shut down mines in supposed aid of fellow miners."

But we've also felt firsthand that 1988 is not 1969 or 1977-78. We know we cannot just "do it like we used to" by ourselves. We've seen that the United Mine Workers' tradition of solidarity and militancy is still alive, but that we live in the same world as our brothers and sisters in other unions, and those who work without the benefit of a union, where company greed has the support of the cops and courts and is used in new ways as their economy goes into today's crises.

LETTERS

Antigay violence

I was one of 1,000 people who protested August 30 against antigay assaults taking place in New York's Upper West Side.

Barry Finnegan and David Frank were attacked August 22 by a gang wielding knives and bats, and shouting, "Faggots!" and "Homos!" Finnegan, who was stabbed twice in the back, is in the hospital with a collapsed lung.

"I will not stand back and be a silent victim," Frank told the protesters. "That is why I am here tonight. I am not going to change; I am going to be what I am."

"Those responsible for antigay, racist, or sexist violence have to be put down," said Maria Maggenti. She represented the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP).

David Wertheimer noted that there were 309 reported assaults on gays or people thought to be gay in the first six months of this year — a 36 percent increase over the number reported over the same period last year.

The rally demanded that the curriculum in city schools include combating antigay bias, and also called for passage of a bill in the New York legislature targeting racist and antigay violence.

Angry at New York Mayor Edward Koch's refusal to speak to the rally — and after being pelted with eggs by a passing motorist — the protesters sat down, blocking traffic in both north and south lanes of Broadway. They called on Koch or Police Commissioner Benjamin Ward to meet with them.

George Kontanis
New York, New York

Unlawful system

After reading successive issues of your publication, I'm convinced that yours is the voice of freedom.

Every person who believes in America and justice and equality at least should know the truth. The whole system is fabricated and unlawful.

A prisoner
Detroit, Michigan

PCs in Nicaragua

"The Revolution in Personal Computing in Nicaragua" is an article that appeared in an issue of the *Bugletter*, a newsletter read by several hundred computer professionals and enthusiasts in the Baltimore-Washington area.

The article reviews the progress Nicaragua has made in adopting computers for a variety of tasks, describing the positive impact on the lives of Nicaraguan workers and farmers that computers are making in health care, housing, and agriculture.

The article explains the important contribution that volunteer technicians and consultants from the United States and other countries have made in training and assisting Nicaraguans in computer technology. It points to the unique opportunity that such volunteer assignments offer in learning firsthand about the Nicaraguan revolution.

Militant readers with professional or technical skills interested in volunteering for programs in Nicaragua may contact tecNICA, a California-based organization that has been instrumental in com-



"I promise to see that no one disturbs her for another eight years."

puter and other technical training and assistance. Its address is 2727 College Ave., Berkeley, Calif. 94705. Telephone (415) 848-0292.
Charlie Rosenberg
Baltimore, Maryland

Campus workers strike

New York University technical and clerical workers, organized as Local 3882 of the American Federation of Teachers, have been on strike. They held a rally September 7 attended by hundreds of workers from other unions as well.

NYU is the largest private university in the country and the eighth largest employer in the city.

It owns \$1 billion in real estate. Local 3882 was organized in 1978 and has won some gains such as elimination of the lowest pay category and three weeks vacation.

Each year, because of low wages, 500 of the 1,500 clerical or technical workers leave NYU. One NYU employee with three children had to live in a shelter because she couldn't pay the high rent.

One of the main demands is an agency shop, in which all workers pay a fee to the union whether they join or not. The union represents all employees and has won many grievances for nonunion workers.

The other main demand is pay equity with the maintenance and security workers, the great majority of whom are male. The clerical and technical staff receive about \$2,000 a year less than these other unionized workers.

Ethel Lobman
New York, New York

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

'One Caribbean, one destiny'

N.Y. meeting discusses perspectives in anti-imperialist struggle

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

NEW YORK — Two hundred people, representing a broad array of political forces, met here at Hunter College September 9 to exchange views on perspectives for unity in the Caribbean and Central America.

A large banner on one wall of the auditorium summed up, in the words of murdered Grenadian revolutionary leader Maurice Bishop, the theme of the evening: "One people, one Caribbean, one destiny."

The meeting was organized by the coalition for Caribbean Unity. The coalition is a grouping of New York-area supporters of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America, which is made up of 38 political parties and movements from 23 countries in the English-, Spanish-, French-, Dutch-, and Creole-speaking Caribbean and Central America.

In all, representatives of more than a dozen political organizations from the Caribbean, Central America, and southern Africa addressed the gathering.

Keynote speaker Don Rojas, former press secretary to Maurice Bishop and currently an executive board member of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement and of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America, received a standing ovation as he was introduced to the audience.

Unity is vital, Rojas said, but "we cannot and must not speak of it in the abstract. Unity of whom and for whom, of what and for what is the real question we should be debating."

"It boils down to a discussion of our unity against their unity."

"And by our unity," he stressed, "we mean the unity of workers and farmers and fishermen and youth and students and women, the unity of patriots, of sufferers, of toilers, of strugglers, of scrunters — our English Caribbean expression for those of us who have to scratch out a daily existence by any means necessary."

"By their unity," he said, "we mean the unity of those who possess power and privilege, wealth and capital, those who have their nests well feathered and their bellies well fed."

The stock market crash of October 1987 signaled that the world capitalist economy is sick, Rojas said. It was a warning the entire world stands on the threshold of a global depression. "Great class battles lie ahead," he concluded, and to prepare for them "the exploited peoples of the region must unite." That is "the only route to genuine social progress and economic development."

James Millette, president of the Trinidad and Tobago Anti-Apartheid Committee, was another of the evening's featured speakers. He pointed to the meeting itself as a concrete step toward breaking down the barriers that have been used for centuries to divide and isolate the peoples of the region.

"The idea of unification in our region has a long history," Millette said, but "little in the way of positive results." That made this effort all the more important. And never before, Millette said, had he seen gathered together "so many people from both the English- and non-English-speaking Caribbean."

Eusi Kwayana, a leader of the Working People's Alliance of Guyana and an opposition member of Parliament, spoke on the struggle to attain unity among the various nationalities that make up the working-class and peasant population of Guyana.

Kwayana had just concluded a three-day fast in support of striking farm workers in California. "We are all victims of the same imperialists and their allied forces," he said, explaining the fast as "an opportunity to demonstrate our concern for oppressed



Speakers at New York meeting included Don Rojas (left) of Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement and Themba Ntinga of African National Congress.



Militant photos by Sevdia Ücer

workers we do not know face to face."

The evening was co-chaired by *Haiti Progrès* editor Ben Dupuy and Esmeralda Brown of the Women's Workshop on the Americas. Brown, a native of Panama, blasted U.S. intervention in her country as well as against Cuba and Nicaragua. "It is U.S. aggression" in the Caribbean and Central America, she said, "that is the major obstacle to access to housing, education, bread, and every other basic thing a human being needs to live."

A highlight of the evening was the greetings conveyed by representatives of a wide range of political organizations.

José Alvaro of the Puerto Rican Committee Against Repression urged attendance at a demonstration to be held in Hartford, Connecticut, September 24, in defense of the 15 Puerto Rican independence fighters who face a frame-up trial there.

David Ortiz, of the Socialist Bloc of the Dominican Republic, stressed the importance of the opportunity the evening offered to strengthen ties between the groups and struggles represented. U.S. imperialism had only itself to blame for such a meeting taking place in New York, he said. Because "after stripping the world, the

United States has become the refuge of millions of impoverished people."

Two of the most warmly received speakers pointed to the links between the struggles in the Caribbean and the freedom struggle in Africa.

Themba Ntinga, representing the African National Congress of South Africa, hailed the role fighters from the Caribbean country of Cuba had played in southern Africa, especially their role in the military defeat of South African troops at Cuito Cuanavale, Angola. Fidel Castro was absolutely right, Ntinga said: "As of now, the history of Africa will have to be written before and after Cuito Cuanavale."

Helmut Angula, representing the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), expressed the gratitude of the people of Namibia for the assistance from Cuba. "The former slaves," he said, referring to the Cuban internationalist volunteers, "are returning to Africa, not as slaves but as combatants."

Other greetings came from Gustavo Acosta of the Revolutionary Democratic Front-Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front of El Salvador, the Committee in Solidarity With Colombia, François Pierre-Louis of the National People's Assembly of Haiti, and the Center for Puerto Rican Studies. In addition, present in the audience were a number of representatives of the Dominican Communist Party and the Association of Concerned Guyanese.

Sept. 24 Hartford march to protest frame-up of Puerto Rican activists

BY CINDY JAQUITH

"A monstrous precedent in our country, contrary to the principles of respect for human dignity and the most minimum rights of every citizen in a democracy."

The president of the Lawyers Association of Puerto Rico, Héctor Lugo Bougal, was expressing the outrage felt by many Puerto Ricans at the mistreatment of prisoner Filiberto Ojeda Ríos at the Roosevelt Roads U.S. Navy base in Puerto Rico.

A longtime fighter for Puerto Rican independence, Ojeda Ríos is one of the Hartford 15. These are Puerto Rican activists framed up by the U.S. government on charges of robbing a Wells Fargo depot in Hartford, Connecticut.

The trial of five of the defendants began September 6 in Hartford. A national march and rally to demand that all charges be dropped against the independence fighters is planned in Hartford on Saturday, September 24. Hartford Mayor Carrie Saxon Perry and local NAACP President Barbara Fuller are among those scheduled to speak.

Organizers say the September 24 action assumes even greater importance in light of the new victimization of Ojeda Ríos. Ojeda Ríos was arrested in Puerto Rico in 1985. Imprisoned in the United States, he had to fight for over two and a half years to win the right to be released on bail.

But he was rearrested August 26 on charges of wounding an FBI agent at the time of his 1985 arrest. Cops took him to Puerto Rico to stand trial, where the U.S.-run courts refused him bail. The judge hearing his request for bail called Ojeda Ríos "a danger to the community," complaining that the prisoner intended to present "an ideological defense" when he goes to trial.

When a doctor insisted that Ojeda Ríos' prison conditions in Puerto Rico were life-threatening (he recently underwent open heart surgery), U.S. authorities moved him

to the Roosevelt Roads military hospital. They shackled him to the bed with a six-foot-long chain.

In statements carried by two Puerto Rican TV stations and one radio station, Ojeda Ríos called his treatment "a crass violation of what are internationally recognized human rights for jailed fighters." He declared his refusal to "accept such humiliation" and launched a hunger strike.

The abusive treatment of Ojeda Ríos by the U.S. military that occupies Puerto Rico aroused deep opposition on the island.

As lawyer Lugo Bougal put it, "This is going to boomerang on the United States in every corner of the globe."

The colonial authorities decided to remove Ojeda Ríos from Puerto Rico, claiming they were concerned about his receiving proper medical care. On September 9 he was transferred — against his will and without his lawyers being notified — to Metropolitan Correctional Center (MCC) in New York City.

Supporters of the Hartford 15 held a

news conference outside the MCC on September 13. Richard Harvey, Ojeda Ríos' attorney, said he will continue to fight for bail for the independence fighter.

Zoilo Torrez, president of the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights, told the *Militant* the rearrest of Ojeda Ríos "is a violation not only of the constitution of Puerto Rico, but a violation of the Fourth, Fifth, Eighth, and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution."

Demonstrators will assemble in Hartford September 24 at 10 a.m. in Bushnell Park. They will march through the downtown area, past the federal courthouse where the trial is taking place, and then through the Puerto Rican community for a rally at 2 p.m. in Betances Park (South Green).

The Sechaba Singers of the African National Congress will be performing at the rally. For more information, contact the Puerto Rican Committee Against Repression in New York at (212) 927-9065; or the Connecticut Committee Against Repression at (203) 244-3963.



"Stop the repression of Puerto Ricans." Frame-up and mistreatment of independence fighters facing trial has aroused opposition.